

How to Raise a Dragon

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Summary: Hiccup and Astrid go to Dragon Island and find a giant egg that hatches into a baby Red Death. The baby dragon then imprints on Hiccup and follows him back to Berk. With the help of his friends, can Hiccup keep the new Red Death a secret long enough to study it, and hopefully train it? Contains Hiccstrid, cause I'm a fan.

1. Chapter 1

Chapter 1:

****This story just came to me, and I just had to write it down! The story is set either during or after Defenders of Berk, and focuses on the dragons as well as Hiccup and Astrid's relationship. This is my first fan fiction.****

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><p>Life on Berk is never dull. Whenever one adventure ends, another begins. And it can be one of the most wildest adventures ever...as well as one of the most romantic.

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><p>Hiccup was in his room with Toothless. He had been letting his mind wander, and his attention had turned to Astrid, his girlfriend.<p>

Hiccup was the first to admit that he was head over heels, well HEEL, in love with her. The only problem was that he had never been able to gather up the courage to tell her that. He had been trying to find the right opportunity to talk to her, just the two of them alone, without any of the other teens butting in. But whenever he came close to actually getting the chance to speak with her, it was always with a witness or two.

Toothless could tell that something was bothering his trainer. He had been sitting at the table in his room, looking at his drawings indifferently. The Night Fury cautiously walked up to his friend, and nudged him gently. Hiccup turned and looked at his friend. The Night Fury gave him a curious look as if to say "_What's bothering you?_" Hiccup sighed.

"Toothless," Hiccup said, "I can't stop thinking about Astrid. I really like her, and I want to tell her that, but somehow I just can't. It's never just the two of us, there's always someone butting in and making things hard for me, no offense. I just want to spend some time with her." Toothless just sat and listened, feeling sorry for his friend for not being able to tell the love of his life that he loved her. Yes, LOVED her. Hiccup had said that he liked her, but he didn't want Toothless to know how much he really cared for Astrid. Even though Toothless was his best friend.

Hiccup sat still and quiet for a while before an idea suddenly sprang into his mind. _What if me and Astrid went to Dragon Island together? There aren't any people there who will interrupt our conversations, and I was planning on going there to explore anyway! That might give me the perfect opportunity to tell her that I love her._ It was true, Dragon Island was pretty much deserted, since most of the dragons had come to live at the village. And yet, there were still many things to be discovered about the island, in case of a new dragon that needed to be trained.

Hiccup turned to Toothless, a big smile on his face. "Hey Toothless," he said, "What if Astrid and Stormfly came with us to Dragon Island, huh?" Toothless looked at Hiccup as if he were crazy. "That way we won't be lonely," Hiccup explained, hiding the fact that it was in his mind, a date, "And if we need help, they can, well, help us." Toothless tilted his head and looked at the ceiling, obviously thinking about what Hiccup had suggested. After a while, he looked back at Hiccup and nodded. "Great!" Hiccup said, "We'll ask them if they want to go in the morning."

Toothless nodded again, and then bounded onto his bed. He scorched the surface of the bed and then lay down on the hot surface. Hiccup smiled as he watched his friend settle in for the night. He looked back at one of his drawings. It was a hand-drawn picture of Astrid. It had taken him a long time to perfect it, and it was one of his best. It looked almost realistic. Hiccup's smile widened at the thought of the two of them, hopefully spending time with each other on the dragons' old island home. Of course, they would need their dragons to get there.

Hiccup then stood up and made way to his own bed, catching a backward glance at the drawing of Astrid while doing so.

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><p>The next morning, Hiccup woke up early to go and ask Astrid if she wanted to go to Dragon Island with him. He found her outside her house with Stormfly, her Deadly Nadder. He stood at a distance, watching the two of them together. Astrid was feeding Stormfly a basket full of fish, with the occasional chicken drumstick. The chicken seemed to have a strange effect on Stormfly, increasing her speed when flying. Astrid had used this to try to beat Hiccup and

Toothless when they raced. There had been a few times when she and Stormfly came close to winning, but the Night Fury would pull ahead at the last second.<p>

After watching the two for a while, Hiccup slowly approached, remembering that Stormfly can be very protective of her rider. Stormfly was the first to notice him as he approached. Astrid noticed Stormfly, and turned in the direction Stormfly was looking. She smiled when she saw Hiccup approaching them.

"So, what's up?" she asked when Hiccup had reached them. "Well, you know how me and Toothless were planning on exploring the dragons' island?" Hiccup asked. "Yeah, why?" Astrid asked. "Well...I was wondering if maybe you and Stormfly would like to go with us, you know to sort of...help out?" Hiccup said, a little nervous at the thought of Astrid's response. "Sure," said Astrid, "we'd love to come with you guys, right Stormfly?" The Nadder nodded and made a warbling sound. "Really?" Hiccup asked, trying to hide his excitement. "Yeah," Astrid said. Hiccup couldn't remember a time he had been so excited. Astrid had said yes. To him! He did his best to make sure he didn't burst with excitement.

"OK, so...tomorrow then?" Hiccup asked calmly. "Sure, tomorrow sounds nice," Astrid replied. "OK," Hiccup said simply. He then realized that this could be the time to talk to Astrid and confess his feelings. But he had already decided to do it when they had the chance to talk on Dragon Island. "So, I guess I'll...see you later then," Hiccup said. Astrid nodded, "Yeah, see you."

Hiccup then turned and walked away, occasionally catching a backward glance of Astrid as he did so. When he was sure that he was far enough away that she couldn't see or hear him, he burst with overflowing excitement. "Yes! She said yes! I can't believe it!" He then turned and noticed that Toothless was looking at him, his green eyes narrowed, and he seemed to be smiling. "Why are you looking at me like that?" Hiccup asked. Toothless seemed to shrug as he continued to give his friend the look.

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><p>What do you think? Is it good, or can it use some improvement? Leave a review, and I'll update as soon as I can!

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2:

I apologize if the first chapter was too short, I'll make sure that the remaining chapters are longer. FYI, I'll be needing a name for the Red Death, so if anyone has an idea about what its name should be, leave a review with your suggestion of a good name.

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><p>The next day, Hiccup was bursting with excitement. He couldn't wait to go to Dragon Island, especially since he was going with Astrid. He quickly packed up some food and clean water, for both himself, and for Toothless. Occasionally, Toothless would give his

friend the Look. "Will you stop looking at me like that?" Hiccup kept asking.<p>

It took a while, but eventually Hiccup finished packing, and he and Toothless headed over to Astrid's house. Hiccup checked both inside and outside, but Astrid wasn't home. He searched the plaza, but she wasn't there either. He was about to leave when a voice startled him. "Hey, Hiccup." It was Astrid. Her sudden appearance made Hiccup jump. Hiccup turned to look at her. "Please don't scare me like that," he said. "Sorry," Astrid replied, "I went over to your house to check on you, but you weren't there, so I thought I'd check out here." "Well, you found me," Hiccup said. Astrid laughed. "Yes I did," she said.

Toothless and Stormfly watched the two of them talk, and eventually began to grow impatient. They both growled and their trainers quickly turned their attention to them. "Right, let's go," Hiccup said as he mounted Toothless. Nearby, Astrid mounted her dragon. Both dragons took off and headed for the island where they had first lived.

Hiccup began to remember when they had first found the dragons' island. He and Astrid had been riding on Toothless, when the dragon suddenly started flying in unfamiliar parts. They had found themselves surrounded by dragons, all carrying food to the nest. They discovered that the reason that they were taking food was to feed their leader, the Red Death. But now that the Red Death was dead, the dragons didn't have to steal food anymore.

However, very little of the dragons' island has been explored, and there could be a new dragon there. That was why Hiccup had decided to go there. By boat, it would have taken them a few hours, but on dragons, it was much faster. In the time it took to reach the island, Toothless suddenly began to have an uneasy feeling. _The Red Death is dead,_ he thought to himself, _What__ could possibly be wrong?_

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><p>Flying above the thick fog, Hiccup was able to see the dormant volcano that was the dragons' nest. He turned to Astrid. "I'll take the left side, you take the right," he said. Astrid nodded and steered Stormfly to the right. Hiccup steered Toothless to the left. They landed on the rocky beach. Hiccup jumped off of Toothless and briefly scanned the area. Nothing. He headed inland, with Toothless following. The closer they got to the nest, the more uneasy Toothless felt. He tried to ignore it as he and his friend started climbing up the side of the volcano.<p>

Unfortunately for Hiccup, the higher they went, the more steep the hill got. He eventually had to climb back down to get on Toothless so they could fly the rest of the way up. Hiccup noticed that the edge of the volcano was just wide enough for Toothless to land on. He told Toothless to gently land on the top of the volcano, and Toothless obeyed.

The view on top of the volcano was breath-taking. Hiccup could see nearly the entire island. But he didn't see anything unusual, or better yet, rare. He sat on the edge of the volcano, looking out at the horizon. Toothless suddenly turned his attention to the hole in the side of the nest, from which the Red Death had emerged on they

day they had battled with it. It was then that the uneasy feeling grew to maximum level. Without Hiccup noticing, Toothless cautiously glided down to the hole to investigate.

Hiccup didn't notice Toothless had left, he was hypnotized by the beautiful view. He sighed. "Astrid would love this," he said to himself. "Love what?" came a familiar voice. Hiccup turned to see Astrid and Stormfly standing next to him. Hiccup, startled by their appearance, nearly fell off from the edge. "I'm sorry," Astrid said quickly, "I didn't mean to startle you." "No, it's fine," Hiccup said, "Everything's fine, just, uh...enjoying the view." Astrid turned and looked out. She noticed how beautiful the view was from there. "Is this what you said I would love?" she asked. "Yes," Hiccup said. "You were right," Astrid said as she sat beside him.

Hiccup glanced at her. _This could be it,_ he said in his thoughts, _This__ could be my one and only chance to tell her that I love her._ Slowly, cautiously, he placed his hand over her own. Astrid glanced at him. Embarrassed, Hiccup looked away. _Come on, _he said to himself, _Don't__ chicken out, now's your chance! _He turned to look at Astrid, only to see that she had gone back to looking out at the horizon. He sighed. Then he remembered something that he had planned for a moment like this. Taking his hand off of hers, he reached into his pocket and pulled out a golden bracelet that he had made himself.

Astrid, noticing that Hiccup had taken his hand back, turned to see him holding what looked like some kind of armband. "What is that?" she asked. Hiccup looked at her, and then gave her the bracelet. "I made it for you," he told her. Astrid took the bracelet and looked at it. She noticed that it had her name engraved in it. "You made this...for me?" she asked quietly. Hiccup blushed. "Yes," he said. Astrid looked at the bracelet before putting it on, around her wrist. "It's beautiful," she said, "Thank you."

Hiccup turned to look at her again. He noticed that she was looking at the bracelet, and he suddenly realized how beautiful she looked with it on. He then realized what he wanted to do. His head was telling him no, but his heart was telling him to go for it. In one swift motion, he placed his hand on Astrid's shoulder, leaned forward, and gave her a quick kiss on the cheek.

Astrid's eyes widened after realizing what Hiccup had done. Usually it was her who had initiated their kisses. But not this time, Hiccup had taken her by surprise. Noticing her reaction, Hiccup turned away, embarrassed. "I'm sorry," he said, "I didn't mean to...I guess I just...I'm sorry." Astrid's expression softened. "That was the first time you ever did that on your own, Hiccup," she said "Why did you do that?" "I guess I just wanted to," Hiccup replied. "That was a very brave move you made," Astrid said, "You took me by surprise." "Yeah, I noticed," Hiccup said.

Hiccup then realized that this was probably his one and only chance to tell her his feelings. He looked around and saw Stormfly preening herself, obviously having at least little or no interest in what was going on. Hiccup went back to looking out at the horizon. He quickly made a decision. He took a deep breath before he spoke. "Astrid," he said. Astrid turned to look at him. "What?" she asked. "There's something really important that I want to tell you," Hiccup said. Astrid patiently waited for him to speak. Her expression was calm,

but her thoughts were the opposite. Is this it? she said in her thoughts, Will he say those three words that I've been waiting to hear from him?

Hiccup softly, cautiously, tried to tell Astrid his feelings. "Astrid, I...I...I, uh..." he paused. "You what?" Astrid asked softly. Hiccup took another deep breath before continuing. "I...I...I love..." but before he could confess his feelings, a loud roar came from out of nowhere. Hiccup and Astrid looked down to see Toothless standing in front of the hole in the side of the volcano. "I think he wants us to check it out," Astrid said. Hiccup sighed, he had lost yet another opportunity to tell Astrid his feelings. Why, why, WHY did there always have to be someone to interrupt?

Astrid stood up and walked over to Stormfly. Stormfly immediately stopped preening and allowed Astrid to mount her. Hiccup slowly stood up and walked over as well, knowing that he needed a ride back down. He climbed onto Stormfly, behind Astrid. With one gentle nudge from Astrid, Stormfly took off and flew down to the hole in the volcano.

When they landed, Toothless made a gesture for them to go in. Hiccup and Astrid got off of Stormfly and followed the two dragons as they walked through the hole. Hiccup was still upset about not being able to tell Astrid his feelings, maybe if he had told her sooner... He was shaken out of his thoughts as Astrid punched him on the arm. "OW! What was that for?" he asked. "That's for taking me by surprise," Astrid said with a small smile. Hiccup suddenly felt a jolt of excitement. He knew what always followed the punch. Astrid leaned forward and gave him a gentle kiss on the cheek. "That's for the kiss," she said softly, before continuing to walk toward the hole. Hiccup's eyes followed her. He wondered why she hadn't kissed him on the lips. He suddenly realized how far ahead the others were, and ran to catch up.

It was nearly impossible to see in the dim light of the nest, but Hiccup could just make out the outline of Stormfly and Astrid. Toothless was much harder to see, being a Night Fury and all. Toothless suddenly shot out a plasma blast, lighting up the cavern. There was a large wall of rocks in front of them. Toothless didn't hesitate to start climbing them. With encouragement, Hiccup started to climb as well. It took a few minutes to reach the top. He noticed Toothless looking out and followed his gaze to see even more rocks making a big circle. Looking down, he noticed an oval-shaped, bump-covered object as big as a boulder. He suddenly realized that it was an egg. A Red Death egg. And the rocks surrounding it was a nest.

Toothless suddenly jumped down, frightened. Hiccup looked at the egg and realized why. It was shaking violently, and orange cracks began to appear. The egg was hatching. He suddenly remembered what happens when a dragon egg hatches.

Moving quickly, Hiccup climbed down, but realized he wouldn't make it. He jumped down, landing hard on the stone floor. Astrid rushed over to him. "Hiccup, what happened?" she asked. Hiccup knew that there were only mere seconds before the egg hatched. "Astrid, get down!" he yelled. Astrid was confused. Hiccup quickly pulled her down as the egg suddenly exploded, with giant pieces of eggshell scattering. A huge fireball erupted out of the heart of the explosion

and landed somewhere outside the hole. Hiccup held Astrid close to him, as eggshells fell to the floor. He felt something hit him in the back of his head before he blacked out.

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><p>The egg hatched! I've decided to leave the revelation of the baby Red Death 'til the next chapter. I've decided that the Red Death would be a species that could reproduce without a mate, and that the baby would be male. If anyone has any ideas for a good name, leave a review and I'll update as soon as I can!

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3:

**I'd like to thank those who left me a review, and suggesting a name for the Red Death. Also, for those who didn't notice in the description, the baby dragon imprints on the first thing it sees after it hatches, which is Hiccup. Of course, normally the first thing it would've seen was its mother. ;) **

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><p>Hiccup didn't know how long he had passed out, but he did know that it had been long enough to worry Toothless. The black dragon was standing over him, looking worried. When he noticed that his friend was awake, he nudged him gently. Hiccup put his hand on Toothless's nose. "I'm okay, bud," he said. He suddenly remembered Astrid. He turned to see that she was still unconscious. In an instant, he sat up and held her in his arms. "Astrid, are you okay?" he asked. Astrid didn't respond. Hiccup checked to see if she had any injuries. He noticed that her usually blond hair had red stains. Oh, no he thought to himself as he felt the back of her head. He took his hand back to find that his fingers were covered in blood.

Hiccup turned to Toothless. "We have to help her!" he said. Toothless nodded, and allowed Hiccup to gently lift Astrid onto his back. With Stormfly following, Hiccup and Toothless took Astrid down to the shore to wash her wounds. Hiccup took out the flask of clean water that he had packed, and gently poured its contents into Astrid's hair. The feeling of the cold water caused Astrid to wake up. "...Hiccup?" she said softly. "Astrid," Hiccup said, noticing that she was awake. "Hiccup...what happened?" Astrid asked. "I think...I think the egg..._hatched_." Hiccup said. "It what?" Astrid asked. "Nevermind," Hiccup said, "You wouldn't believe how glad I am to see that you're okay." Astrid smiled as Hiccup gently helped her off of Toothless's back.

It was just then that the two Vikings heard a squawk. They turned to see Stormfly, looking out with an alarmed expression. Hiccup cautiously left Astrid's side to see what the Deadly Nadder had seen. The first thing he noticed was that the ground had been scorched by something hot. He remembered the fireball that had shot out of the egg as it hatched. He followed the trail of scorched ground to see a rough-skinned ball of scales lying just a few feet away from him and Stormfly. In his earlier haste to help Astrid, Hiccup had not noticed it. He had been more concerned about helping his girlfriend.

Hiccup slowly advanced on the scaly object. He had a feeling that he knew what it was. He was about two feet away from the ball of scales before it moved. Hiccup backed up as two wings stretched out, and a heavily armoured head with six small eyes, as well as a clubbed tail appeared. Four thick, unsteady legs appeared as the unusually large wings unfolded. It was a baby Red Death. Hiccup took a step back as the dragon stood up, it was about as big as Toothless was.

The baby yawned, its small eyes blinking in the sunlight. It looked at its surroundings, and its eyes suddenly landed on Hiccup, who was trying to back away unnoticed. Stormfly let out a squawk and ran over to Toothless, who was trying to help Astrid stand up. The baby Red Death growled softly as it slowly made its way toward a frightened Hiccup. The young Viking turned away, his eyes shut tight, as the giant hatchling leaned its head toward him. "No, don't!" Astrid screamed, noticing that the dragon was advancing on Hiccup. Both Vikings prepared for the worst, when the Red Death suddenly opened its mouth, and licked Hiccup with its large tongue.

Hiccup's eyes shot open as the Red Death drew its head back. The baby cocked its head to the side, and let out a soft growl. Hiccup was confused, why didn't the Red Death attack him? It was true that it was just a baby, but he knew what it would eventually grow into. Unless...

Hiccup quickly headed back to where his friends were. He helped Astrid get on Stormfly before climbing onto Toothless. The Red Death's eyes followed Hiccup as he moved. The two dragons took off, flying away from the island. The Red Death noticed that Hiccup was leaving, and tried to spread his wings and fly. But since he had just hatched, the baby dragon couldn't take off of the ground. He noticed the ocean that surrounded the island, and suddenly got an idea. Wading into the water, he paddled out, after the rapidly disappearing dragons. It seemed as though the original Red Death had been able to swim, as the young baby was swimming without any trouble, keeping its head above the water with ease. It followed Hiccup's scent as the Night Fury and the Deadly Nadder quickly disappeared from his sight.

* * *

><p>Later, when the four friends made it back to Berk, they went to the Dragon Academy. They didn't know how to tell their friends what they had seen, but Hiccup didn't want to lie to them either.<p>

Fishlegs was the only one listening as Hiccup and Astrid explained what had happened. They had both decided to leave out most of the details about what had happened at the top of the volcano, but Hiccup didn't hesitate to tell his friend about the baby Red Death. At the sound of the words 'Red Death,' Snotlout and the Twins quickly turned their attention to Hiccup. "You actually found a baby Red Death?" Snotlout asked. "Yes, we did," Hiccup replied. "Can I train it to eat my sister?" Tuffnut asked. "Hey, I was gonna train it to eat you!" Ruffnut shouted. "Nobody is going to train it to do anything," Hiccup said. "Why not?" Snotlout asked with a disappointed look on his face. "Because, its back at the dragons' island," Hiccup said, "We left it there so that it wouldn't do any harm to any of us."

Just then, Toothless roared and ran into a corner in the arena.

"Toothless, what's wrong?" Hiccup asked. More roars broke the air as the other dragons ran and hid in the corners. _The Red Death?_ Hiccup said in his thoughts, _How did it follow us here?_ Thinking quickly, he told everyone to grab a handful of fish and put them in the biggest cage in the arena. His plan was to hopefully restrain the baby dragon before it did any real harm.

The friends waited for the Red Death to appear. The dragon didn't catch the scent of the fish until it was nearly twenty feet from the academy, which wasn't until the late afternoon. It had tried to follow Hiccup's scent, and it was tired from swimming such a long distance. The swimming and the searching had made him hungry. He followed the scent of the food into the cage, with difficulty as he was barely small enough to fit through the entrance to the academy. He made his way into the cage and started eating the fish. He took no notice of the dragons, or the Vikings hiding behind them.

After seeing the Red Death enter the cage, Fishlegs ran over and tried to close it. He pulled the lever, but the door didn't go down. Hiccup looked up to see that the Red Death's bulk was blocking the door from lowering to the floor. It was then that he had realized that the Red Death had nearly doubled in size. _How in Thor's name did it grow so fast?_ he asked himself. "I thought you said it was as big as Toothless!" Fishlegs shouted. "It was!" Hiccup replied.

The Red Death quickly finished off the rest of the fish and turned his attention to the other dragons. Frightened, most dragons made a break for the exit, leaving their trainers totally exposed. The only dragons that didn't leave right away were Toothless and Stormfly. However, when the Red Death turned to look at Stormfly, she let out a terrified squawk and ran, with Astrid right behind her. Hiccup knew that there was a good reason the dragons were afraid of the baby Red Death, since the original Red Death had caused them to work so hard to bring it food, to avoid being eaten by their own selfish ruler.

The baby turned to look at Toothless, who surprisingly stayed put. But as the Red Death began to advance, Toothless's fear grew to a point where he could bear it no longer. He ran off, leaving Hiccup totally exposed. The baby wrapped his tail around Hiccup to prevent him from running away. The other teens stopped running when they saw Hiccup's condition. "Hey, nobody bullies Hiccup but me!" Snotlout said as he started to make his way toward the Red Death. "No, wait!" Astrid said, holding out her arm to prevent Snotlout from advancing any further.

The dragon wasn't hurting Hiccup. He was giving him the same curious look that he wore back on Dragon Island after he hatched and saw Hiccup. The dragon leaned forward and licked Hiccup with his giant tongue. He then removed his tail from behind Hiccup, tilted his head, and made a soft growling sound. Hiccup's eyes widened. "You remember me," he said with realization. The baby dragon continued to give him a curious look. Hiccup suddenly realized why the dragon had come to Berk, he had followed him there. Thinking quickly, Hiccup took off his riding vest and threw it to the side. The dragon's eyes followed the vest, realizing it had Hiccup's scent on it. The moment the dragon laid its eyes off of him, Hiccup made a break for the exit. As he ran past the others, he told them to follow him. Once everyone was out of the arena, Hiccup told Fishlegs to seal the exit so that the Red Death couldn't get out.

The Red Death turned and noticed that Hiccup was leaving. In an act of desperation, he made his way toward the exit, only to have the door be slammed in his face. The baby cooed sadly. "Sorry, bud," Hiccup whispered. He and the others went to the top of the arena, above where the Red Death was lying in wait at the exit.

"Okay, I give up," said Fishlegs, "What was that about?" Hiccup sighed, knowing that he had a lot of explaining to do. "When the egg hatched," he said, "Me and Astrid were hit with bits of eggshell. We went down to the shore to wash our wounds, when Stormfly saw the baby. It was all curled up in a ball. It uncurled itself and it noticed me, and I guess it sort of imprinted on me, and followed me back to Berk." "Wait, wait, wait," Snotlout suddenly interrupted, "You think that it thinks you're its _mother_?" "How else do you explain why it didn't eat me?" Hiccup asked. "It's common," Fishlegs said, "Usually the first thing a baby reptile or bird sees after it hatches is its mother." "It does make sense," Astrid added, "When the dragon hatched, Hiccup was the first thing it saw."

Hiccup looked at the baby dragon in the arena. It actually seemed kind of...cute. "Obviously this Red Death is different from the first," he said. He turned to the others. "If it thinks I'm its mother, then maybe I can train it," he said, "But I'll need some help. Who's with me?" All of the teens remained silent. The silence was broken when Fishlegs spoke up. "This isn't because you're not my friend," he said nervously, "But that thing is actually giving me the creeps." He walked off, then later broke into a run as he and his Gronkle, Meatlug, went home. Tuffnut started to walk off. "Is there a reason why you're leaving?" Hiccup asked. "Yeah," Tuffnut said, "I can't train it to eat my sister!" "And I can't train it to eat my brother either!" Ruffnut said before walking off. Snotlout glared at Hiccup. "I'm not helping you," he said. "You never help me with anything," Hiccup pointed out. "Exactly!" Snotlout said before walking off. Only Astrid was left.

Hiccup turned to face her. "So is it just you and me, or just me?" he asked. Astrid shrugged. "You're gonna need someone to help you train that dragon," she said. "So, you'll help?" Hiccup asked. "Sure I will," Astrid replied, "You didn't think I'd leave you, did you?" "What? No, of course not!" Hiccup said. He suddenly felt something breathing on the back of his neck. He turned to see Toothless standing very close to him. Toothless gave him the Look and grunted, most likely attempting to laugh. "Toothless," Hiccup said, "Stop giving me that look! And what are you laughing at?!" Astrid laughed. "I think it's kind of cute," she said. Hiccup rolled his eyes and turned his attention back to the Red Death. The baby dragon was looking up at him with curiosity. _I've sometimes thought about being a parent,_ Hiccup said to himself, _But I never thought it would come down to this!_

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><p>So, it's Hiccup and his girlfriend taking care of a dragon who thinks Hiccup is its mother! They'll name the dragon in the next chapter, so if anyone has any last-minute suggestions of a name, leave a review.

Chapter 4:

****I would like to thank all of those who gave me their opinions on what the Red Death's name should be. I would especially like to thank ialmostwon51 ****for their suggestion. FYI, there will probably be more Hicstrid in the later chapters, for those of you who are a fan like me.****

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><p>Hiccup never would have imagined that he would have to parent a Red Death. But yet, here he was, in the arena, with his girlfriend helping him raise a baby Red Death that thought that he was its mother. He leaned against the wall, with Toothless standing next to him. He watched the baby Red Death as he tried to get a good look at Stormfly. But the Deadly Nadder still wasn't used to the Red Death, and ran away when he got close. The baby dragon watched Stormfly retreat with a confused look on his face. The Red Death had obviously never seen a Deadly Nadder before.<p>

"Do you think we should name it?" came a voice. Hiccup turned to see Astrid standing next to him. This time, he wasn't startled. "What?" he asked. "Do you think we should name the Red Death?" Astrid asked. Hiccup sighed. "Astrid," he said, "Once you name something, you start to get attached to it." "Yeah, but it's already become attached to you," Astrid said. Hiccup knew that she was right. "Alright, we'll name it," he said. "You should name it, since it's imprinted on you," Astrid suggested. Hiccup looked at the Red Death and tried to think of a good name. There was something about the dragon that moved him. It wasn't like its mother had been, it didn't act like a merciless killer. It was curious about the world, and the creatures that lived among it.

After a while, Hiccup suddenly came up with a name. "Mortem," he said. "What?" Astrid asked. "His name is Mortem," Hiccup said. "How do you know it's a 'he'?" Astrid asked. "I don't," Hiccup said. "Why did you decide to call him 'Mortem'?" Astrid asked. "I don't know," Hiccup said, "I guess he...looks like a 'Mortem'." "If he is a 'he'," Astrid added. Hiccup nodded.

Hiccup suddenly remembered what had happened on Dragon Island and realized he hadn't been able to tell Astrid that he loved her. Now would've been a good time to talk to her, and maybe even confess his feelings. He looked at Astrid, whose attention was on Mortem. He slowly reached out and took her hand in his own. Feeling his gentle touch, Astrid turned to look at her boyfriend. "Is something wrong?" she asked. "Sort of," Hiccup said, "I...I need to talk to you." Sensing that the two of them wanted to be alone, Toothless walked away, heading over to Stormfly to comfort her.

"So, what is it Hiccup?" Astrid asked. Hiccup said nothing as he stared into her ocean blue eyes. He couldn't help thinking how beautiful Astrid was. He sighed, and snapped out of his trance. "I...I...I want to tell you...I want..." he struggled to say. He couldn't seem to bring himself to tell her how much he really cared about her. Astrid sighed. She figured that if Hiccup couldn't say anything, she would have to. "Do you like me?" she asked. "What?" Hiccup asked. "Do you like me?" Astrid said again. Hiccup felt like he had been kicked in the stomach. Astrid had never brought up the

subject of liking each other, and he wasn't sure how to answer her. "I'll think about it," he said. Astrid nodded, let go of his hand, and walked off to give him time to think.

* * *

><p>About an hour later, Mortem finally noticed that he was, in his mind, alone. Astrid was with Stormfly, trying to comfort her dragon. Hiccup was off to the side with Toothless, drawing in his notebook. Mortem noticed his 'mother' and walked over to him. The giant baby dragon's shadow covered Hiccup and Toothless and he advanced. Toothless made no attempt to run away as Mortem stood over them, watching Hiccup draw. Hiccup had drawn a picture of a full-grown Red Death, and it looked menacing, like Mortem's real mother had once been. Next to it, he was drawing a picture of Mortem. He looked like his mother, except cuter, and with a look of kindness and curiosity in his eyes. As Hiccup finished drawing, he looked up at Mortem and noticed that the young dragon had taken a liking to his drawing. Hiccup looked at his drawing of Mortem and suddenly got an idea. He closed his notebook and ran out of the academy, with Mortem's eyes following him as he left.<p>

When Hiccup returned, he was holding his old stuffed dragon. It looked a lot like the Red Death, sparing a few menacing details. He held it out to Mortem. Mortem leaned in and sniffed the toy. "That's right," Hiccup said, "It's a little 'you'." Mortem turned his attention back to Hiccup. Hiccup gently set the stuffed dragon down and slowly raised his hand out to Mortem. Mortem watched Hiccup's hand as it came closer. Unfamiliar with the gesture, Mortem did nothing as Hiccup's hand came to rest on his nose. Mortem didn't know what to think at first, but then he realized that he actually enjoyed his 'mother' touching him like this. It was soothing, and the gentle touch took away his pains and his worries. He closed his eyes as Hiccup rubbed the young dragon's nose. After several minutes, Hiccup pulled his hand back. Mortem's six eyes all opened as he felt the gentle touch of his 'mother' leave him. The dragon sighed, gently picked up the dragon toy in his mouth, and gave it to Hiccup. The minute the stuffed toy fell into Hiccup's hands, Mortem turned and walked away.

Hiccup walked over to Toothless and put the stuffed dragon in the saddle bag. He wasn't sure what to do with Mortem, but then he remembered to cove in the forest. He could take Mortem there and teach him how to hunt for food for himself, and how to react towards other Vikings. He smiled at the thought of Mortem living among friends. He was struck out of his thoughts when Astrid suddenly punched him in the arm. "OW! What was that for?" he asked, rubbing his arm. "I'm still waiting for an answer," Astrid said, "Do you like me?"

Hiccup had been given a lot of time to think about the question, and he had decided to be honest. "Sort of," he said, looking away. "What do you mean 'sort of'?" Astrid asked, "Either you like me, or you don't, it's really that simple." Hiccup stared at the ground, wondering if he really wanted to tell her the truth. "Do you like me?" Astrid asked again, this time in a much more serious tone of voice. Hiccup sighed. "Not really," he said softly. A look of shock spread across Astrid's face. She hadn't expected Hiccup to give her that answer. Her expression changed from shock to anger. "Fine," she said, "That's fine. Be that way." She turned and walked

away.

Realizing his mistake, Hiccup started after her. "Astrid, wait!" he said, "You don't understand, that's not what I meant!" Astrid stopped so suddenly, Hiccup nearly bumped into her. She turned to face him. If looks could kill, Hiccup would have dropped dead on the spot. He had never seen Astrid so angry before. "I don't understand what?!" she half-asked, half-yelled. "The reason that I don't like you is because...because..." Hiccup tried to say, but he trailed off. "Because _what_?" Astrid asked. Hiccup sighed. He knew that if he wanted to keep her, he had to tell her the truth, and he had to do it now before it was too late. He took a deep breath before he finished his statement. "...Because I love you."

The minute she heard his gentle words, Astrid's face softened. She suddenly realized what Hiccup had meant. He didn't like her, he loved her. Hiccup turned away, letting the truth sink in. "You love me?" Astrid asked softly. Hiccup turned to face her. "Yes," he said. After hearing this, Astrid felt tears in her eyes. She made no effort to hide them as she pulled Hiccup into a tight hug. After noticing that Astrid was crying, Hiccup gently returned the embrace. "I'm sorry, Hiccup," Astrid said as tears slid down her cheeks, "You were right, I didn't understand what you meant. I'm so sorry." After hearing her apology, Hiccup gently stroked her back to calm her down. The soothing touch of his hand rubbing her back caused Astrid to sigh, and loosen her tight grip around his shoulders. "It's okay," Hiccup whispered as he stroked her back gently, "Everything's gonna be okay." Astrid sighed. "Hiccup..." she said softly. She pulled out of the hug and finished her statement in a whisper. "...I love you too."

Her soft, gentle words warmed Hiccup's heart. "You do?" he asked. "Yes," Astrid replied. Hiccup gently placed his right hand on her cheek. Astrid smiled as a single tear of happiness slid down her cheek. Hiccup gently wiped it out with his thumb. The two smiled at each other, and each of them knew what they wanted to do. Astrid started to lean forward, when Hiccup suddenly stopped her. Hiccup then began to lean in slowly, pulling Astrid toward him. Realizing what he was doing, Astrid closed her eyes as Hiccup leaned in closer. Hiccup suddenly stopped, his lips just a mere inch away from hers. Astrid opened her eyes. Hiccup gave her a small smile before bravely closing the gap between their lips.

The two of them had kissed before, but this kiss was different. It was full of promise, happiness...and love. It lasted longer than all of their previous kisses combined, and they both were enjoying it. Neither of them was sure how long the kiss lasted, but it had definitely been a while, for when they finally pulled apart, the sun was close to setting completely. Neither of them seemed to notice as they gazed into each other's eyes for what seemed like forever. "I love you," Hiccup said quietly. Astrid didn't hesitate to answer. She wrapped her arms around him for another hug. "I love you too," she whispered. Hiccup felt tears in his eyes as he wrapped his arms around her. It had taken all day, but he had finally found a chance to be with the person that he loved the most. Astrid. His Astrid.

"I've loved you since I met you," he said, "but it was for more than your looks. You were everything that I had ever wanted to be, and I loved that about you. I loved everything about you, and I still do. I

love you, Astrid." Astrid's eyes welled up with tears once again after she heard him tell her how much he really cared about her. "I love you too, Hiccup," she said, "And I promise that I always will...no matter what." Hearing this, Hiccup hugged her tightly. After what seemed like an eternity (when in reality it was several minutes), they pulled out of the embrace. They both leaned in for another kiss, this time with more confidence than before.

Neither of them noticed the three dragons, standing off to the side, watching them.

* * *

><p>Yes! Hiccup finally told Astrid that he loved her! Hicstrid fans rejoice! What do you think of the dragon's name? 'Mortem' means 'death' in Latin, as it was told to me by ialmostwon51. Leave a review, and I'll update again ASAP!

5. Chapter 5

Chapter 5:

****This chapter will focus more on the other teens' opinions on Mortem. They're not really interested in becoming familiar with the young dragon, each in their own ways. Also, this is the first chapter in which we get a view on what the dragons are thinking and saying.****

* * *

><p>Hiccup was up before the sun the next morning. He knew that if he wanted to get Mortem safely to the cove, he had to do it before any of the other villagers, especially his dad Stoick the Vast, found out. Moving carefully, and quietly, he made his way downstairs and outside, without waking up Stoick. Toothless was surprised to see Hiccup awake so early. Hiccup quickly put on Toothless's saddle and prosthetic tail. The two of them then flew off to the academy, where Mortem was.<p>

Meanwhile, Mortem was sleeping at the academy. He had been depressed ever since his 'mother' had left him there, for a reason he did not know. He didn't mind being alone as much as he did before, especially since he was dreaming. He was in the middle of a really good dream too. He was flying above the clouds, with Hiccup and Toothless beside him, guiding him in the right direction. He enjoyed the cool wind against his scales, and the feeling of freedom. It didn't last long, though, because later in the dream, he was surrounded by big burly Vikings, all of them looking as scary to him as his real mother had been scary to everyone else. The largest Viking, obviously the leader of them all, gave the others a command. "Take 'im to the cages," he said, "we train 'im to kill in the mornin'." SLAM! Mortem was behind bars, heavy chains around his neck to keep him from escaping. He pulled on the chains, but they refused to break. He opened his mouth and let out a call for help. "_Mama! Save me! I'm scared, Mama! Help me, please! MAMA!_"

Mortem woke up, his eyes wide with fear. He looked around and noticed that the sky was dark, and outlined a bright pink, which indicated

that the sun would be up soon. It was then that Mortem realized it was all just a dream. _It all happened so fast,_ he thought to himself, _And it seemed so real. I hope that the bad parts of my dream never come true, I don't want to leave my mama._ The thought of being away from his 'mother' frightened him. The sound of flapping wings brought him out of his thoughts and back to reality. He breathed a sigh of relief when he saw Hiccup riding on Toothless, heading straight for the academy.

When the Toothless landed, Hiccup dismounted him and walked over to Mortem. "Hey, bud," he said, "Did you miss me?" Mortem nearly knocked Hiccup down as he lunged forward and nuzzled his 'mother'. "_Did I miss you?_" Mortem said, "_I was worried about you! I thought you left me, Mama!_" Toothless rolled his eyes, and Mortem noticed. "_What's wrong?_" Mortem asked. Toothless gave him a serious look. "_He can't understand us,_" he said to Mortem, "_He doesn't know that you're talking to him, or that you're calling him 'Mama'._" "_How come?_" Mortem asked. "_Because we're dragons,_" Toothless said, "_And he's a human, and we don't speak like they do._" "_Why?_" Mortem asked. "_Because that's just the way things are,_" said Toothless. "_Why?_" Mortem asked. "_Because that's the way the gods made us,_" Toothless said. "_Why?_" Mortem asked. "_Because, THAT'S WHY!_" Toothless shouted in frustration. "_Oh,_" Mortem said sadly.

Hiccup had witnessed the entire conversation, and although he couldn't understand what they were saying, he knew that Mortem was giving Toothless trouble. Hiccup walked over to Toothless to comfort him. "Take it easy bud," he said, "You have to be patient with Mortem." Toothless rolled his eyes. _Yeah, that ship has sailed already,_ he said in his thoughts.

* * *

><p>Hiccup knew that since Mortem was too young to fly just yet, they would have to walk the entire way to the cove. As much as he wanted Mortem to get used to his surroundings, walking long distances was bad for his prosthetic leg. He decided to ride on Toothless all the way there.<p>

Mortem had never been in the forest before, and he enjoyed being in it. There were so many new sights to see, and so many new smells and sounds. He stopped once to eat some bark off of an old tree, but immediately wished he hadn't. "_I suppose you've never heard of the saying, 'curiosity killed the Changewing',_" Toothless said as he watched Mortem spit out the bark.

It had taken nearly three hours, but they finally made it to the cove. The first thing Mortem noticed was all the wide-open space. It was big enough for him to explore, and discover new things. Hiccup nudged Toothless, who jumped and glided into the cove with ease. Mortem watched as the two of them landed gracefully on the ground near the lake. Hiccup looked back up at Mortem. "Okay, Mortem, give it a try!" he said. Hearing and understanding his 'mother's' words, Mortem jumped and tried to spread his wings like Toothless, but ended up crashing into the ground, just mere inches away from Hiccup and Toothless. "You'll get the hang of it eventually," Hiccup said as Mortem got up.

Hiccup then turned to Toothless and started to mount him, when he

felt a slight tug on his vest. He turned to see Mortem gently gripping his riding vest in his teeth. The look in Mortem's eyes told Hiccup that the young dragon didn't want his 'mother' to leave him. "I'm sorry, Mortem," Hiccup said, "But I can't stay here, you have to stay." Mortem tugged harder, pulling Hiccup toward him. "Mortem, no," Hiccup said, "I said stay!" Hearing his 'mother' yell, Mortem let go of Hiccup's vest. Hiccup looked at Mortem sadly. He hadn't meant to scare the dragon, he was only trying to make a point. "Look," he said in a much calmer voice, "I don't want my dad to mount your head on our wall, okay? I promise I'll come back later for you Mortem, now stay."

Mortem watched sadly as Hiccup mounted Toothless. He obediently sat there, and watched as the Night Fury spread his wings and took off, with Hiccup on his back. He made no attempt to stop them as they flew out of sight. Mama said he'd come back, Mortem thought to himself, And I shall wait here until he does.

* * *

><p>By the time Hiccup had reached the village, the sun was up, and everyone was in the Great Hall, having breakfast. He left Toothless outside the Great Hall with the other dragons before he went inside. He grabbed himself a wooden plate with two chicken eggs before joining his friends at their table. Naturally, he sat next to Astrid.<p>

For a while, nobody said anything. But the silence was broken when Astrid finally spoke up. "So, how'd it go with Mortem?" she asked. Hiccup looked at her with surprise. "How did you know I..." he said, but she stopped his sentence. "I went to check on him in the arena, and he wasn't there, so I figured you had taken him somewhere." "Yeah, I took him to the cove," Hiccup said, "He should be safe there." He had completely forgotten that the other teens were in their presence. Of course, until Snotlout spoke up. "What are you guys talking about? And who's Mortem?"

Hiccup and Astrid exchanged a quick look at each other before Hiccup answered Snotlout's question. "It's what I named the you-know-what," he said in a whisper. "The what?" Tuffnut asked. Hiccup sighed in frustration. He whispered as quietly as he could, "The Red Death." "Oh, that," Tuffnut said quietly. "Maybe it's not a good idea to talk about that thing in public," Fishlegs said nervously. "That's exactly what I was thinking," Hiccup replied.

Astrid listened to the others talk. She had wanted to talk to Hiccup that morning, but she couldn't do it now, with the other teens around. "Could you guys excuse us for a few minutes?" she asked. "Why?" Ruffnut asked, "Are you guys officially team players with Mortem?" "I guess you could put it that way," Astrid said. "I made it clear to that dragon, and I will make it clear to all of you guys," Snotlout said, "Nobody bullies Hiccup but me!" "Mortem is not bullying me," Hiccup said, "He thinks I'm his mother!" "Yes, we know," said Fishlegs, "You made that perfectly clear yesterday." "Can we just have some time alone, please?" Astrid nearly shouted. Fishlegs immediately grabbed his plate and ran off to sit at another table. "Fine," Tuffnut said as he walked off, his sister right behind him. Snotlout stayed put. "Is there a reason why you're still here?" Astrid asked. Snotlout grunted. "I've officially decided that I hate you guys!" he said before getting up and leaving.

"Okay, so what's up?" Hiccup asked. "I was thinking about last night," Astrid said, "And I realized that I might have been a little too rough on you. I'm sorry that I didn't understand." "Hey, it's okay," Hiccup said, "I wouldn't have understood me either." He forgave her so easily, it was almost unfair. Astrid hung her head, feeling sorry for herself. Hiccup noticed her, and held out his arms. "Come here," he said. Astrid didn't hesitate. She threw herself into his arms and hugged him. Hiccup smiled as he returned the embrace. "It's okay," he said. "I know that already," Astrid said.

They sat that way for what seemed like hours before Astrid spoke again. "I love you, Hiccup." "I love you too, Astrid," Hiccup said. Astrid pulled out of the hug and playfully punched Hiccup in the arm. "Don't mention this to any of the others, okay?" she asked. "Sure," he said, rubbing his arm. Astrid smiled, then she leaned forward and gently kissed Hiccup on the lips. Hiccup's eyes widened with surprise, before they closed as he kissed her back. He heard Astrid giggle in response as she gently pressed her lips further against his. It would have lasted as long as the kisses they had shared the night before, if they hadn't realized where they were and what they were doing. They pulled apart, their faces as red as a Monstrous Nightmare. "I promise I won't mention this either," Hiccup said with a smile. Astrid smiled back before pulling herself out of his embrace and turning back to her plate of food. Hiccup leaned forward and gave her a kiss on the cheek before turning to his plate of food. He didn't notice Astrid's smile widen, or her face turn a darker shade of red when she felt the kiss.

* * *

><p>Obviously the other teens don't want much to do with Mortem, and I wouldn't be surprised. I had thought that Snotlout would've said something about him being the only one who bullies Hiccup, and I'm sure that what he said would be mostly true. And FYI, Tuffnut and Ruffnut are still upset with the fact that they can't train Mortem to eat each other. And Fishlegs, well, Mortem still gives him the creeps. Also, can anyone guess who the Vikings from Mortem's dream are? Leave a review, and I'll update ASAP.

6. Chapter 6

Chapter 6:

Sorry it's been a while, I've had a lot of time to think about how I would like this chapter to turn out. I've been getting lots of reviews to update this story, and I am happy to tell you guys that I haven't abandoned this story, it's too early to do that! I've wondered what would happen if you actually wrote out your story and submitted it to the company that makes the movie. Then again, I don't think anyone ever does that, and I don't think that's allowed. Just another 'what if' question.

* * *

><p>Hiccup had been thinking about how he would train Mortem to be friendly towards other Vikings, like the other dragons were. He knew that Mortem's mother had forced the other dragons to bring her food,

and he had to teach Mortem how to hunt on his own so that it wouldn't be a repeat of what had started the Dragon War. His next thought was getting to show Mortem how to react in certain conditions. That gave him the idea to make training gear for Mortem. He immediately set to work, sketching what would eventually turn out as a sort of leash for Mortem.<p>

The idea was to get Mortem to follow Hiccup, so that he could be shown what was right, and what was wrong. It took awhile, but Hiccup was able to make a type of saddle that would fit around Mortem. A metal ring that was set to hang below Mortem's neck was where the leash would go. Hiccup settled on a metal chain, as that would be the only thing strong enough to hold the young Red Death. After hours of work, the leash and saddle had been perfected.

As Hiccup stood back to admire his work, he was startled by a familiar voice. "I thought I'd find you in here." Luckily for him, it was Astrid. If it had been his father or Gobber the blacksmith, they would have questioned the saddle that had been made. Hiccup turned to find her standing in the entrance. "What is it with you and sneaking up on people?" he asked sarcastically. Astrid shrugged. "I don't know," she replied, "I thought you'd caught on by now." She looked past him and noticed the saddle for Mortem. "Did you make that?" she asked. She walked over to get a better look at it. "Yeah," Hiccup said, "I made it for Mortem so we can train him." Astrid nodded. "Do you think it will fit him?" she asked. "Not really," Hiccup answered honestly.

Astrid turned and looked at Hiccup, a small smile on her face. "What?" Hiccup asked. "That kind of reminds me of last night," Astrid said, "When you said you didn't like me." Her smile slowly faded. Hiccup walked up to her and held her in his arms. "But now you know why I said that," he said. Astrid looked at him and smiled. Hiccup smiled back at her. "I love you," he said. "I love you too," Astrid said. They embraced, neither of them wanting to let go. Hiccup then remembered the promise he had made to Mortem, about coming back to the cove later. He told Astrid about the promise, and allowed her to come with him. "We can continue this later," he said. Astrid pulled out of the hug and gave Hiccup a quick kiss on the lips. "Now we can continue this later," she said. Hiccup smiled at her before walking over to the saddle and grabbing it. Then he and Astrid headed back to their dragons and left for the cove-together.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Mortem was still in the same spot he was when Hiccup had left him there. He had obediently refused to leave that spot until his 'mother' returned. He had gotten really hungry, and there was almost nothing to eat, except for the few schools of fish that lived in the lake. Mortem had tried many times, unsuccessfully, to catch them and eat them. All he had ever ended up with was a mouthful of water, which helped him to satisfy his thirst.<p>

Mortem didn't think he could bear it any longer, when the sound of flapping wings caught his attention. He looked up to see Toothless and Stormfly flying side-by-side, with Astrid and Hiccup on their backs. Mortem was overjoyed to see his 'mother' finally come back for him, as promised. The two dragons landed and Hiccup got off of Toothless and ran over to Mortem. Mortem growled with excitement, and nuzzled his 'mother'. "I'm happy to see you too, Mortem," Hiccup

said. He turned to Toothless. "Let's see if we can teach him how to fish," Hiccup said. Toothless nodded and slowly approached the water's edge. Mortem watched as Toothless waited patiently for the fish to swim by. Hiccup slowly moved behind Mortem, the saddle and chain leash in his hands.

The saddle was specially designed to fit on the spikes on Mortem's back, but at the same time provided a comfortable seat. Hiccup cautiously climbed onto Mortem's back, and let the saddle's straps hang down Mortem's sides. He gestured for Astrid to go underneath and fasten the straps. Astrid nodded and did just that. Mortem suddenly felt the straps as they fastened around him. They didn't feel as heavy as the chains looked in his dream, but he still didn't like the feeling of being restrained. In little or no time at all, the saddle was fastened tightly on Mortem, with the young dragon trying desperately to get a good look at it. Hiccup slid off Mortem's back and got a good look at the saddle. It was a perfect fit.

Mortem turned his attention back to Toothless, who taught him how to hunt for fish. Mortem soon learned that the trick was to wait for the fish to come near, and then aim at a certain spot to strike at. He tried that a few times, and was able to finally catch himself some dinner. When he grew tired of striking ahead, he opened his mouth under the water and waited for the fish to swim in. Despite his efforts, his strategy didn't really work the way he had expected. The only thing that actually swam into his open maw was a small moray eel. Much to everyone's surprise, Mortem swallowed the eel whole, without a single complaint. Mortem wasn't really afraid of eels much, and he actually liked the way it tickled his throat as he swallowed it.

Hiccup watched nearby as his 'son' kept trying to learn to hunt for food. Astrid was sitting next to him, her head resting on his shoulder. Hiccup wrapped his arm around her waist and pulled her closer. Astrid smiled and put her hand on his chest. She sighed when she found his heartbeat, and her own heartbeat began to beat in sync with his. Hiccup looked down at her, and then placed a soft kiss on top of her head. Feeling the kiss, Astrid blushed. She moved further into the embrace and closed her eyes. Just before she dozed off, she whispered to Hiccup, "I love you." Hiccup smiled, and then tightened his grip around her waist. "I love you too," he said.

* * *

><p>After that, Hiccup and Astrid visited Mortem in the cove every day after dinner. The young dragon quickly learned how to fish and catch wild pigs for food, and he didn't have to order a single dragon to get it for him. Hiccup occasionally let Mortem out of the cove to explore the forest, keeping Mortem on the leash so that he wouldn't wander off too far.<p>

The days soon molded into weeks, and soon Mortem was old enough to learn how to fly. Hiccup and Toothless started off by showing Mortem how to take off from the ground. It took awhile, but Mortem was eventually able to stay airborne for a few seconds before falling back to the ground. Over time, Mortem's wings grew stronger, and he soon started to practice flying all by himself, when no one was around. He hoped that he could learn how to fly fast, so that he could follow his 'mother' back to the village.

Unaware of Mortem's plans, Hiccup focused on more important things that were happening at the village. Even though he and Astrid had confessed their love for one another, they still kept it secret in the village. But whenever they were alone in the forest, they refused to hide their true feelings.

One day, many weeks after Mortem had hatched, Hiccup and Astrid lay down in the clearing where Astrid practiced her axe-throwing. They talked for a while, occasionally laughing and exchanging a quick kiss or two. After the two calmed down after laughing yet again, Hiccup spoke to Astrid. "I want to thank you for helping me train Mortem. It means a lot to me." Astrid smiled, her face turning bright red. "It's no problem," she said, "I always like to help you out." Hiccup smiled, his face turned as red as hers. "Is that because you love me?" he asked. "Yes," Astrid said. Hiccup took her hand, their fingers intertwined. "I love you too," he said. Astrid turned to see him smiling at her. She smiled back before leaning forward and capturing his lips in a long, gentle kiss. Hiccup eagerly kissed her back, his arms wrapping around her waist, as her arms wrapped around his neck. It lasted longer than the kisses that they had shared many nights before, and it was by far one of their best.

They pulled apart after several long minutes, and their eyes met. They embraced, and they both fell asleep underneath the beautiful sunset sky.

* * *

><p>I'm sorry if this chapter is too short, I'll try to update again as soon as possible.

7. Chapter 7

Chapter 7:

I would like to thank those who left me a review, and for those of you who guessed who the Vikings from Mortem's dream are, I can say that they were good guesses. You'll be getting the answer to the question later in the story.

* * *

><p>Nobody noticed, but Mortem was growing. It wasn't a huge growth spurt, he was only growing little by little-so far anyway. As Mortem grew, he started to become smarter. Smarter than his real mother had been. When he was fishing, he would use his huge size to his advantage by casting a shadow over the water. He somehow knew that fish usually retreated to darker areas, where they could hide. And when they hid in his shadow, he would dart his head forward, and catch them in his mouth. As for the wild pigs, Mortem would dig a hole and lure the pigs into the trap, ready to be gobbled down.<p>

And it wasn't just meat that Mortem craved. He was beginning to have an interest in plants as well, especially Dragon Nip. The Nip was mostly just an afternoon snack, Mortem would usually only eat a mouthful a day. As well as Dragon Nip, he began to eat the roots of old, dead trees. He had begun to eat them out of curiosity, and he discovered that they tasted a lot better than tree bark. He also ate

any berries, or other kinds of wild fruit he could find. He stood clear of anything that smelled funny, because according to him, anything that smelled bad, tasted bad.

Again, nobody noticed, but Mortem was becoming an omnivore. He was eating both plants and meat.

But the biggest thing that no one noticed was that Mortem was secretly practicing his flying skills. His wings grew stronger with each passing day, and he went from hovering above the ground to flapping his wings powerfully, to gain altitude. His goal: to follow his 'mother' back home. Little did he know, the Vikings that lived there had all had the same bad experience with his real mother, and would fight him if they saw him. But for Mortem, his only thoughts and worries were on finding his 'mother'.

One day, Mortem was able to fly without much trouble. While his 'mother' was away, he tried once again to escape the confinement that was the cove. This time, he flew high enough to reach the ledge that was the one and only way in and out of the cove. He dug his claws into the rocks and dirt, desperately holding on as he pulled himself out of the cove. He was free at last! He quickly headed off in the direction of the village, following his 'mother's' scent.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Hiccup didn't know that Mortem had escaped. He didn't know that Mortem had trained himself to fly. What he did know, however, was that something had caused him to have a strange feeling, like something wasn't right. The moment he felt this feeling, he called Toothless, and the two of them flew off to the cove.<p>

Hiccup usually came to check on Mortem before going to bed, but this time when he checked, Mortem wasn't there. He called Mortem's name a few times, but the dragonet was too far away to respond. Hiccup quickly got back on Toothless and headed back to the village. Before he could look for Mortem however, he had to tell Astrid what had happened, so she could help him look.

"He did what?" Astrid asked when Hiccup told her that Mortem wasn't at the cove. "He escaped," Hiccup said, "He must have come here looking for me. We have to find him before someone else does!"

The two of them split up, each of them cautiously calling Mortem's name. As Hiccup came to the docks, he called Mortem's name more urgently. "I told him to stay in the cove," he said to himself, "How in Thor's name did he escape?" That's when he noticed something that caught his eye. It was Mortem. He was down by the shore of Thor's Beach, fishing. Hiccup quickly ran down to Thor's Beach, calling for Mortem. Strangely, Mortem was too focused on fishing to hear his 'mother' calling him.

Hiccup called for Mortem again when he reached Thor's Beach. "Mortem, what are you doing?" he asked, "You shouldn't be here, someone could see you!" Mortem turned his attention to Hiccup, a sad look in his eyes. "You can't be here," Hiccup said again, "Get back to the cove!" Mortem glanced at the fish, and then back at Hiccup. "Mortem, please," Hiccup pleaded, "I don't want to lose you!" Mortem glanced at the fish on last time before giving Hiccup a sort of smile and

bounding over to meet his 'mother'.

Mortem nuzzled Hiccup, who breathed a sigh of relief. "Don't run off like that again, do you hear me?" Hiccup asked. Mortem pulled back and gave Hiccup a guilty look. Hiccup sighed again, and wrapped his arms around Mortem. Mortem purred softly, as if he were trying to apologize. "Oh well," Hiccup said quietly as he hugged his 'son'.

It was at that moment that Astrid arrived. "So, you found him," she said as she watched Hiccup embrace Mortem. Hiccup stopped hugging Mortem and turned to face his girlfriend. "How did you know where to find us?" he asked. "I heard you yelling for Mortem," Astrid said, "And I came to see if something was wrong." She walked over to the two of them. "There was something wrong," Hiccup said, "But everything's all right now, right Mortem?" The giant dragonet nodded. "Good to know," Astrid said.

There was a long silence before Hiccup asked, "Do you want to pet him?" Astrid's eyes widened, surprised at what Hiccup had said. Hiccup asked again, "Do you want to pet Mortem?" Astrid didn't answer at first, but then whispered, "I never pet him before." "It'll be fine," Hiccup said, "Just reach your hand out to him." "Do you think he'll let me pet him?" Astrid asked. Hiccup shrugged, he wasn't sure. Astrid would've preferred an answer that would help her gather up the courage to do what Hiccup had asked, but she did want to pet Mortem. She slowly reached her hand out, toward Mortem. She slowly advanced on the dragonet, who eyed her curiously.

When Astrid's hand came in contact with Mortem's skin, Mortem suddenly realized why Hiccup seemed to like her. Despite that she was a tough Viking warrior, she had a soft spot. She showed this as she gently rubbed Mortem's nose, careful not to frighten him. He suddenly realized what he was thinking, and turned his attention back to Astrid. Astrid. That's what his 'mother' called her. And she called him 'Hiccup'. His unusually smart brain helped him realize that his 'mother' was male. That meant that his 'mother' would in fact be his 'father'. But what about a mother? Was that how he should be viewing Astrid? He wasn't sure, and now, he didn't really care that much.

Seeing the two 'people' that he loved the most slowly bond, Hiccup advanced over to them and put his hand on Mortem's nose as well. He looked at Astrid, whose attention was on Mortem. Smiling, Hiccup moved his hand so that it rested on hers. Feeling their skin make contact, Astrid turned to Hiccup. His smile widened. She smiled back, and took his other hand in her own. They moved their hands off of Mortem's nose, and their fingers intertwined. They stood that way for a while, gazing into each other's eyes.

Mortem watched as the two of them seemed to show affection towards one another. This confirmed his thoughts from earlier. Hiccup represented his father, and his girlfriend would indeed represent his mother. Seeing the two of them together, and confirming his thoughts about the two of them brought a smile to the dragonet's face.

Hiccup and Astrid took little notice of this as they continued to be hypnotized by each other's eyes. Hiccup pulled Astrid close, and connected his forehead with hers. They both closed their eyes. "I love you, Astrid," Hiccup said. Astrid's smile widened when she heard him tell her the three lovely words that she had wanted so long to

hear from him. "I love you too, Hiccup," she said. Hiccup then leaned forward, and pressed his lips gently against hers.

Mortem watched in amazement. He hadn't seen the two of them kiss since the night they had confessed their feelings for one another. _They really do love each other, _he thought to himself, _I wonder if they love me just the same._

It seemed like hours before the two love-struck Vikings pulled apart. They both opened their eyes to find the other's. They would have stayed that way the whole night, had not Mortem growled softly. "I better take him back," Hiccup said. "You go do that," Astrid said, "I'll wait for you." Hiccup smiled at her before walking over to Mortem, grabbing the chain leash, and leading him back to the cove.

Astrid's eyes followed the two as they headed back to the cove. She smiled at the thought of Hiccup coming back and spending time with her. She then realized how much she had helped him with Mortem. _Does Mortem view me as one of his parents?_ she asked herself. Her smile slowly faded as she thought of this. She shrugged before heading back to her house, hoping that Hiccup would meet her there.

* * *

><p>Not as much Hicstrid in this chapter as the one before it, and that's because I don't want too much of it in this story. For those of you who don't know, a dragonet is a baby dragon. And it looks like Mortem is viewing both Hiccup and Astrid as his 'parents', and in the correct way. Review and I'll get back to you ASAP!

8. Chapter 8

Chapter 8:

Hiccup will explain why he's worried about Mortem in this chapter, and why he's starting to be protective of him. I'm not sure if he'll get to the point where he'll start to be overprotective, but it's possible that he will.

* * *

><p>Hiccup wasn't sure how Mortem escaped, but he had an idea how. The minute he and Mortem got to the cove, he let go of the leash and asked Mortem to fly down. Mortem spread his wings and easily glided down, flapping his wings a few times to stay airborne. This confirmed Hiccup's thoughts. Mortem had flown out of the cove. No doubt that now that he could escape, he could follow Hiccup back to the village when he wanted to.<p>

Hiccup climbed down into the cove and walked up to Mortem. "Listen, Mortem," he said in a calm, but firm voice, "You can't follow me to the village. If someone sees you, they'll see you as a threat. They'll attack you, and maybe even kill you if they get the chance, and I don't want them to get that chance. Now stay here." He turned and walked to the exit, but suddenly stopped, turned, and gave Mortem a serious look. "I mean it," he said, before turning and leaving the cove. This time, Mortem did stay, and watched as Hiccup left for the

village. _I guess Dad knows what's best for me,_ he thought to himself.

* * *

><p>Hiccup remembered that he had promised Astrid to meet up with her again later. When he couldn't find her at Thor's Beach, or in the plaza, he decided to check her house. He walked up the front steps to the door. He was about to knock, when he realized that she could be sleeping. Despite this, he knocked anyway. He didn't get a response, so he knocked again. Still, nothing. Thinking that something could be wrong, Hiccup let himself in. The house was surprisingly quiet. Both of Astrid's parents were out, and Astrid was sitting at the table, alone. She looked rather depressed.<p>

Hiccup walked over and sat next to her, careful not to make too much noise. Astrid sighed. Hiccup couldn't help but wonder why she was so depressed. "Is something wrong?" he asked softly. Astrid sighed again. "I guess I'm just...I don't know," she said. Hiccup looked at her with pity in his eyes. He slowly wrapped his arm around her and pulled her to him. This made Astrid feel a little better, but still depressed. "Would it help if I did something for you?" Hiccup asked. Astrid shrugged. Once again, Hiccup felt pity. He embraced her gently, in hopes of helping her feel better. Astrid sighed once again and returned the embrace.

"If there's something bothering you, you can tell me what it is, Astrid," Hiccup told her gently. Hearing his gentle words, Astrid felt tears in her eyes. She did her best to hold them in as she spoke. "I've been thinking about how I treated you for the past few years, and I'm sorry. I never understood before how much I meant to you. All that time, all of those mean things I said to you, everything I did, and you still loved me. I'm so sorry Hiccup, for everything." "So am I," Hiccup said. Astrid blinked away her tears and pulled out of the embrace. She connected her forehead with his, her eyes closed. Hiccup mirrored her actions. They held each other in their arms for what seemed like forever.

"Is something bothering you?" Astrid suddenly asked. It was Hiccup's turn to sigh as he pulled away and turned so that he wasn't facing her. "I'm worried about Mortem," he replied honestly, "I love him like he was my own son. I don't want to lose him like I lost my mom." He shut his eyes at the memory of losing his mother. He took a deep breath before continuing. "The same with Toothless and my dad, and especially you, Astrid. I don't want to lose any more of my family." Astrid's eyes widened at what he had said. "You think of me as part of your family?" she asked. Hiccup's eyes widened as he realized what he had said to her. "Well, a family is the people who love you no matter what, and that you love in return, so I guess you could say that you qualify as a part of my family, if you know what I mean," Hiccup said.

Hearing this, Astrid looked away and blushed. "So that's a yes?" she asked. "Yes, yes it is," Hiccup replied. Astrid hoped that Hiccup wouldn't notice her blush. Luckily for her, he didn't seem to notice as he embraced her once again. She hugged him back. "I don't want to lose you, Astrid," Hiccup said. Astrid hugged him tighter. "I don't want to lose you either, Hiccup," she said, "You mean more to me than you ever have before." "Same here," Hiccup said, "But about you." For a while, all was quiet, but then Hiccup spoke again. "I love you,

Astrid," he said. Astrid held back tears, refusing to shed them as she heard Hiccup tell her those three lovely words. "I know," she said, "I love you too, Hiccup."

They both pulled out of the embrace, and then they both leaned in for a long, passionate kiss. The last of each of their problems faded away as they kissed, and they knew that their love would last forever. They pulled away after what seemed like days, and their eyes met. Neither of them could break their gaze from the other, and they knew that it was real. It was definitely true love. They connected their foreheads once again, this time not a single problem held them back.

Hiccup's smile suddenly faded as a thought came into his head. "Do you think we should show Mortem to everyone?" he asked. Astrid shrugged. "Maybe," she said, "but we'll have to make sure that they understand he's not dangerous." Hiccup knew that she was right, but he was afraid to tell her that. He knew that his dad didn't usually understand things right away, especially when he didn't listen to things that were extremely important. "We'll do it the day after tomorrow," he said, "That should give us enough time to make a cage big enough for him."

Astrid gave him a look. She wouldn't have thought that Hiccup would think about locking Mortem up. "It's not because he's dangerous," Hiccup explained, "It's to protect him from the others." Astrid nodded. There was silence once again before Hiccup spoke. "Astrid?" he asked. "Yeah?" Astrid replied. "Promise me you'll help me with Mortem," Hiccup said, "The last thing that I want is to hurt him." He paused before adding, "Or you." "I understand," Astrid said, "And I promise I'll help you." Hiccup gave her a small smile. "Thanks," he said. The two of them embraced once again. Astrid smiled in the embrace and whispered, "I love you." Hiccup smiled and replied, "I love you too."

Realizing how late it was, the two of them pulled out of the embrace and exchanged a quick kiss goodbye. Hiccup then stood up and made his way to the door. He suddenly stopped and looked back. Astrid was heading up the stairs to her room, when she stopped and looked back as well. Hiccup gave her another smile before opening the door and leaving. Astrid smiled back at him as he left, and then headed up to her room to rest.

* * *

><p>A lot of Hicstrid in this chapter. Did you get my little 'Phineas and Ferb' reference? Anyway, like Hiccup said, he doesn't want to lose any more members of his family, and that explains why he is being protective of Mortem. Post a review, follow, or favorite!

9. Chapter 9

Chapter 9:

I've decided to try to add a little humor into this story for the time being. Don't worry, we're getting closer to the ending with each chapter!

* * *

><p>If Hiccup and Astrid had said that Mortem was a bad dragon, they would have been lying. Mortem was, in fact, a very good dragon. It was just that they were the only ones who knew that. Besides their dragons, of course.<p>

The morning after Mortem's escape from the cove, Hiccup left for the academy early. He wanted to make sure that the cage they had selected would be big enough for Mortem to fit in.

Astrid was at her house, thinking about what had happened the night before. Hiccup had actually tried to comfort her. She was wondering if he actually cared about her that much. She was so lost in thought, she barely noticed her mother walk into the room.

"Astrid," said Mrs. Hofferson, "Your father and I are going to that birthday party on the other side of the village for the day, and we won't be back until late at night. You can take care of yourself that long can't you?" Astrid was barely paying attention. "I don't see why you must have a birthday party for a two-year-old," she said, "It's not like they'll remember much." "It's not for the kid," her mother replied, "It's for the parents" "The parents?" Astrid asked. "Yes, to reward them for all the hard work they've done," said Mrs. Hofferson. Astrid scoffed. "Toddlers are easy," she said, "They eat, they go to the bathroom, they sleep. End of story."

Her parents left for the party a few minutes later, and Astrid was left alone. With nothing else to do, she decided to go and look for Hiccup.

Astrid took off on Stormfly, heading in the direction of the cove. She had thought she would find Hiccup there with Mortem, but there was no one at the cove when she got there. Thinking quickly, she headed off to the academy.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Hiccup was already at the academy with Toothless and Mortem. They were testing the cage to make sure that Mortem would fit. It was a tight squeeze, but Mortem was able to fit, as long as he stood at a certain angle.<p>

Mortem had just walked out of the cage when Astrid arrived on Stormfly.

"Hey, Astrid," Hiccup said when he saw her. Astrid jumped off of Stormfly and walked over to Hiccup. "I thought I'd find you here," she said. Hiccup shrugged. "I was going to go and look for you," he said, "But it looks like you beat me to it." "Why would you look for me?" Astrid asked. Hiccup sighed. "You know that birthday party they're having?" he asked. "For the two-year-old?" Astrid asked. She wanted to make sure she knew what he was talking about.

"Yes, that party," Hiccup said. He continued, "My dad and Gobber are going there too, and they're leaving me in charge of the forge." Astrid shrugged. "Okay, so?" she asked. "I was wondering if maybe you could look after Mortem for me while I'm working," Hiccup concluded. Astrid shrugged again. "Sure," she said, "I could do that." "Thanks," Hiccup said. He then pulled Astrid close and hugged her. Astrid was

shocked, she hadn't expected that. Her shocked expression turned into a smile as she hugged him back.

Hiccup pulled out of the hug after several minutes. "I should warn you," he said, "Mortem can be quite a handful...maybe even two. Think you can handle it?" "I'm sure I can," Astrid said. "Good," Hiccup said, "I'll come back later. Possibly at the end of the day." He walked away, toward the exit.

As Hiccup made his way out of the academy, Astrid remembered the night they had. "Wait," she called. Hiccup stopped and turned to see Astrid walking toward him. "Is something wrong?" he asked. "No," Astrid said, "I was thinking about last night." "What about it?" Hiccup asked. "I wanted to thank you for comforting me," Astrid said. Hiccup blushed. "It was nothing, really," he said. Astrid gave him a small smile before asking, "How much do you care about me?"

Hiccup's blush faded when he heard her ask him that. He sighed, and then held Astrid in his arms. "I care about you a lot Astrid," he said, "Ever since I met you. I honestly thought that you were the best at being a Viking, and I was right. You were better than anyone I ever knew. I respected that, and I loved that about you." He stared deeply into her ocean blue eyes as he said this. He leaned in and connected his forehead with hers. "I still do," he whispered.

Without warning, Astrid leaned in and pressed her lips against his. Hiccup closed his eyes and kissed her back. As quickly as it started, the kiss ended, much too soon for Hiccup's liking. Astrid pulled away, her eyes searching for his own. Hiccup slowly opened his eyes, and they met Astrid's. The two of them connected their foreheads once again. "I love you," Hiccup said. Astrid smiled. "I love you too," she said, "More than I probably should." Hiccup smiled back at her.

They would have stayed that way the entire day, if Toothless hadn't growled. Hiccup remembered that he was supposed to be at the forge, so he gave Astrid a quick kiss goodbye, and then ran over to Toothless and mounted him. The two of them flew off to the forge, leaving Astrid and Stormfly with Mortem.

* * *

><p>Later that day, when all the other villagers were at the party, Astrid took Mortem for a walk around the empty village. Because she wanted someone to talk to, she asked Ruffnut to come with her.<p>

The two girl Vikings talked while Mortem checked the village. As mentioned before, he wasn't really a bad dragon. He was indeed a good dragon. The only problem was that he had rarely gotten a chance to check the world out, and he wanted to know how things worked in the village, since he had never been there before.

"So, you've really gotten to know this dragon, huh?" Ruffnut asked. "He has a name you know," Astrid said, "It's Mortem." "Duh, I knew that," Ruffnut said. "Then if you know what's good for you, you'll start calling him by his name," Astrid said. "Fine, whatever," Ruffnut grunted. There was silence for a moment, but then Ruffnut asked, "How's it going with you and Hiccup?"

Astrid sighed. "Well," she said, "You know how when you meet someone, and you think that you know everything about them? And then you actually start to hang out with them, and you start to realize that there are things that you didn't know about them, and it feels weird?" "You mean like when you see your teacher at the market square weird, or like when someone you've known for a long time decides to get a tattoo weird?" Ruffnut asked. Astrid thought about the question, and answered, "The first thing weird." "That's good," Ruffnut said, "'Cause I was thinking about getting a tattoo."

Mortem paid no attention to the girls talking. He was more focused on all the cool things in the village. It wasn't until he noticed a basket full of fish when he darted forward, and pulled the leash out of Astrid's grip. "Mortem, get back here!" Astrid said, running after the dragonet. Mortem nudged the fish, expecting to get some form of response. But the fish didn't respond at all. Mortem realized that all the fish in the basket were already dead. He tasted one. He decided that he preferred fresh fish over dead fish. By that time, Astrid had caught up to him and took hold of the leash. She led Mortem away from the fish, hoping that she could find something else for him to do.

Ruffnut had left and gone back home after Astrid took off after Mortem, and Astrid was on her own once again. Astrid sighed and went to look for Stormfly. She was hoping that Stormfly would help keep Mortem busy. But then, Mortem started making a sort of squawking sound. Astrid tried to shush him, but Mortem only squawked louder. There was a loud growling sound, and Mortem looked down at his stomach. He was hungry.

Leading Mortem on the leash, Astrid went down to the docks. She hoped that Mortem would catch his own food there, like he did in the cove. Mortem then pulled Astrid down to the shore, where he sat and waited for some fish to swim by. Realizing what Mortem was doing, Astrid decided to go and look for Stormfly. She cautiously dropped Mortem's leash and started to slowly back away from the dragonet. "I'll just be a minute," she said to Mortem, "Don't go anywhere. STAY!" She ran off to look for her dragon.

Mortem fished himself some dinner, including a few eels. It was then he realized that he was alone. Then he noticed a few Terrible Terrors eating some small fish that they caught themselves. Because he had never seen dragons like them before, Mortem went over to check them out.

A few minutes later, Astrid arrived with Stormfly. But Mortem wasn't down by the shore. Astrid turned and saw Mortem chasing after a flock of Terrible Terrors. "Oh my gosh," she said before running after Mortem yelling, "Get back here!" As much as Stormfly wanted to help, she was still uneasy about being around Mortem. Astrid continued to chase after Mortem, who continued to chase after the Terrible Terrors. "Mortem Haddock," she said, "Get back here!" Hearing her voice, Mortem stopped. Astrid quickly grabbed Mortem's leash. "Okay, playtime's over," Astrid said as she led Mortem back to the academy.

* * *

><p>The rest of the day passed slowly for Astrid. She had to make

sure that Mortem didn't escape the academy, so that none of the other Vikings would see him. She and Hiccup had both agreed to save Mortem's revelation for the next day. That evening, Hiccup finally came back to the academy. Astrid didn't think she would be any happier to see him. Hiccup jumped off of Toothless's back when they landed, and he walked up to Astrid.<p>

Astrid ran over to meet Hiccup. To express how happy she was to see him, she gave him a hug. Hiccup hugged her back. They soon pulled out of the embrace and shared a kiss. "So how did it go with Mortem?" Hiccup asked after they broke the kiss. Astrid shrugged. "It was fine," she said. "He didn't give you too much trouble?" Hiccup asked. "Nope," Astrid replied.

However, at that moment, Mortem started to squawk again. Astrid sighed with frustration as she turned to look at the dragonet. "Okay, I get it," she said, "Lesson learned. Toddlers aren't easy. The irony is not lost on me! MORTEM!" The dragonet continued to squawk. Hiccup walked over to comfort him. Astrid sighed again. "He better stop squawking before I make him." she said to herself.

* * *

><p>Later that night, Hiccup was in his room, sitting at his desk. He had gone back to staring at his drawings. He didn't notice Stoick standing behind him, until Toothless growled softly. Hiccup turned to see Stoick looking at him.<p>

Hiccup jumped at the sight of his father. "DAD! What are you doing up here?" he asked nervously, as he tried to hide his drawings of Mortem. "I came to talk to you," Stoick said. "About what?" Hiccup asked. "About you and Astrid," Stoick said. "What about me and Astrid?" Hiccup asked, closing his sketchbook. "You've been spending more time together, haven't you?" Stoick asked. "I don't know," Hiccup said, "Have we?" Stoick sighed. "Don't play dumb with me, Hiccup," he said, "I know that you have feelings for her."

Hiccup sighed. What could he do? As long as Stoick didn't know about Mortem before the meeting the next day, it would be fine with him. "Well, we're just...hanging out I guess," he said nervously. Stoick laughed. "I know what it is you're going through, son," he said. "You do?" Hiccup asked. "Trust me," Stoick said, "It's just like when I first met your mother, Hiccup. So...When are you going to ask her?" "Ask who what, dad?" Hiccup asked. "When are you going to ask Astrid to marry you?" Stoick asked.

Hiccup's eyes widened. He hadn't really put much thought into proposing to Astrid. "Well...I haven't really thought much about it, really," he said. "Well, just tell me when you do it, alright son?" Stoick asked. "Okay, dad," Hiccup said. Stoick nodded and went back downstairs.

Hiccup sighed. Toothless walked over to his friend. Hiccup turned to look at Toothless. "What do you think I should do?" he asked. Toothless sat down and shrugged. Hiccup sighed again. "I don't know either," he said sadly.

* * *

><p>I feel sorry for Hiccup and Astrid. Astrid had to chase

after Mortem all day, and Hiccup is under pressure by Stoick about marrying Astrid. What did you think about the humor? Review, Favorite, and Follow!

10. Chapter 10

Chapter 10:

****Told you I'd be back soon. Now for Mortem's revelation to the entire village!****

* * *

><p>The entire village was gathered at the academy, under Stoick's command. Hiccup had told him that he had wanted to show everyone something important. Stoick didn't know what it was, but he was sure that it was as important as it sounded.<p>

Everyone was waiting for the revelation, and no one was getting more impatient than Stoick. Mortem was in the cage, but due to the shadows, it was difficult to see what was in there. Many impatient Vikings tried to catch a glimpse of what was in the cage, but they couldn't see what was in there. Mortem thanked his lucky stars that no one could see him yet. The Vikings gathered around the arena were reminding him of the big mean Vikings from his dream.

Hiccup was at the entrance, hiding in the shadows like Mortem was. He was worried about how the Vikings would react once they saw Mortem, mostly how his dad would react. Toothless was standing next to Hiccup, his attention also on the other Vikings. He remembered what had happened the last time Hiccup had walked into the arena at a time like this. The two friends turned their attention to Mortem, who was giving them a nervous look.

Hiccup sighed and turned his attention to Toothless. "Toothless," he said, "Stick with our plan, okay? Don't leave my side, and make sure that nobody hurts Mortem." Toothless nodded obediently. Hiccup smiled, he was happy that he could rely on a friend like Toothless.

"Be careful out there with Mortem," said a voice from behind them. Hiccup didn't have to turn and look to know that the voice was Astrid. His smile faded as she said that. "It's not just Mortem that I'm worried about," he admitted as he looked into the crowd of Vikings, finding Stoick standing among them. Toothless warbled sadly, understanding what Hiccup had meant.

"I know what you meant by loving Mortem like he's your own son," Astrid said. Hiccup turned his attention back to her as she said this. "Are you starting to feel that way about him?" he asked. Astrid smiled. "He's a good dragon," she said, "Now's our chance to show everyone that." Hiccup gave her a small smile in return. His smile then faded. "Astrid," he said, "If something goes wrong, help us make sure that they don't hurt Mortem." Astrid's smile faded as he said that. She began to remember the first time that he had asked her to help him if something went wrong. "I will," she said, "Just promise me that you'll be careful." "I will," Hiccup said.

Astrid gave him a small smile before wrapping her arms around him.

Hiccup stood there, stunned for a minute before hugging her back. "Do me a favor," Astrid said, "Just don't do anything stupid." "I'll try not to," Hiccup said. Astrid smiled and tightened the hug. "I love you," she said softly. Her soft, gentle words warmed Hiccup's heart and seemed to give him hope. "I love you too," he said. Astrid's smile widened. "I know," she said, leaning back and kissing his cheek.

They both pulled out of the embrace, their hearts filled with new hope. Hiccup leaned forward and gave Astrid a quick kiss on the lips before walking into the arena, with Toothless right behind him.

The Vikings stopped talking the minute they saw Hiccup. Stoick watched carefully as his son made his way toward the cage the creature was in. Hiccup turned to Toothless to make sure he hadn't left his side. Hiccup took a deep breath and pulled on the lever that would open Mortem's cage. The door to the cage opened, and everyone leaned in to get a better look at what was inside.

Mortem had never been more nervous in his entire life (Despite that it had only been a few weeks since he hatched). The Vikings were all leaning in to get a good look at him. He was scared. How would they treat him? Did they know that he was a good dragon? "Come on, Mortem," Hiccup said gently, "It's okay." Hearing his 'father's' voice, Mortem began to move out of the tight space he was in. Hiccup held out his hand to Mortem, beckoning him to come closer. Mortem remembered how much he loved having Hiccup rub his nose, and continued to emerge out of the shadows.

Many of the Vikings gasped as they saw what was making its way out into the open. Stoick turned to Gobber, who was standing next to him. "Gobber," he said, "Is that what I think it is?" Gobber shrugged.

Astrid watched from the entrance as Hiccup led Mortem into the open. Mortem growled nervously. "It's okay," Hiccup said, "Everything is alright, Mortem." Mortem calmed down at the sound of Hiccup's voice. A few of the Vikings were actually amazed that Hiccup had trained such a dragon. But many of them were still worried about what would become of the new Red Death. And unfortunately for Hiccup, Stoick was one of them. "Put that thing back in its cage!" he said. "NO!" Hiccup yelled for everyone to hear, "You have to listen to me." He slowly advanced on Mortem, his hand held out. "He is not like his mother was," he said, "He won't hurt any of us. He's a good dragon." As he said the last sentence, his hand came to rest on Mortem's nose. Quite a few of the Vikings gasped, either in amazement or in horror.

Hiccup turned to see Astrid watching them. He gestured for her to come into the arena. Astrid hesitated, but walked over to them. As she neared them, Hiccup grabbed her wrist and guided her hand onto Mortem's nose. More of the Vikings gasped as they saw what was taking place. Hiccup and Astrid ignored them and continued to pet Mortem. Just then, they heard Stoick's voice. "What is that thing?" They both turned to see Stoick standing behind them. He had left his place above the arena and he wanted to talk to them, Hiccup especially.

Hiccup sighed and lifted his hand off of Mortem's nose. "Dad, it's not what you think..." he began. "Do you have any idea what that is,

Hiccup?" Stoick asked. "Dad, please," Hiccup pleaded, "You have to give me a chance to explain..." "Is that what you've been doing all this time?!" Stoick shouted. Hiccup fell silent. Stoick pointed to Astrid. "And why is she involved in this?" he asked. Astrid was about to explain that she had said that she'd help Hiccup, but Hiccup cut her off. "I asked her to help me," he said, which wasn't exactly the truth.

Astrid was shocked. Why was Hiccup saying it was his fault? "Hiccup..." she said, but Hiccup cut her off again. "Astrid," he said, "If there's anyone getting in trouble here, it's me." He was trying to protect her. He was taking the blame for something he didn't do to keep her from getting in trouble. Just the thought of it brought tears into Astrid's eyes. He really does care about me, she said in her thoughts.

Hiccup turned back to Stoick. "This is also what we've been doing this entire time," he said, which wasn't exactly the truth either. Stoick let out a frustrated sigh. "Dad, listen," Hiccup said, "Mortem is not a bad dragon..." "You NAMED it?!" Stoick shouted. "Yes, I named him!" Hiccup shot back. "How do you even know that thing is male?!" Stoick asked. "I don't," Hiccup admitted, "I just guessed." "That thing had better be male," Stoick said, "Because I do not want that thing to grow up and start laying eggs, and making more evil dragons while doing so!" Hiccup didn't tell Stoick that from what he knew about the Red Death, it only laid a single egg.

"Look at what that thing's mother did to you, Hiccup!" Stoick said, and pointed to his son's prosthetic. "Mortem is not like his mother!" Hiccup said. "How do you know?" Stoick asked. "Because I just do!" Hiccup said. He was very nearly on the verge of cracking. "How?!" Stoick asked again. "BECAUSE HE THINKS THAT WE'RE HIS PARENTS!" Hiccup finally shouted. All of the Vikings gasped. Stoick gave his son an angry look. "What do you mean it thinks that you're its parents?" he asked.

Hiccup sighed. "Me and Astrid found his egg on Dragon Island, and it hatched." he said, "I was the first thing that he saw after he hatched, and he imprinted on me. He followed me back to Berk, and I asked Astrid to help me train him, and she did. And, eventually Mortem began to view us both as his parents." Again, he lied about why Astrid helped him. "He didn't ask me to help him," Astrid said suddenly. Stoick and Hiccup turned to look at her. She took her hand off of Mortem's nose and walked up to them. "I said that I would help Hiccup raise Mortem, because he needed it," she said. She turned to look at Hiccup. "I can't afford to see you take the blame for both of us," she said quietly. Hiccup nodded, understanding what she was doing.

Stoick spoke up, trying to get their attention. "I don't care what happened then, I want that thing off of the island," he said and pointed to Mortem. "No," Hiccup said. Stoick stared at his son. "What?" he asked. Hiccup sighed. "I said 'no,'" he said. Stoick glared at him. "Mortem is not a bad dragon," Hiccup said, "You just have to give us a chance to prove it!" Stoick shook his head and sighed. "You have one week to change my mind," he said, "And if that thing does anything that threatens us, that will be the last thing he will ever do."

Stoick then turned and walked away. "EVERYONE IS DISMISSED!" he

yelled to the rest of the Vikings. All of the Vikings turned to leave without any complaints. Hiccup's heart slowly sank down to his stomach. What was once filled with hope was quickly replaced by depression and worry. Mortem wasn't a bad dragon, and that was the honest truth. How come he and Astrid were the only ones who could see that?

* * *

><p>The day passed by slowly for Hiccup. He was too depressed to leave the academy. At sundown, he was still sitting in the same place he had been since that painful discussion with Stoick. Astrid, Toothless, Stormfly, and Mortem watched as Hiccup sat there. "He's been like that all day," Astrid said sadly. The dragons all nodded. Astrid sighed, and walked over to Hiccup to talk to him.<p>

Hiccup barely paid any attention to Astrid until she was standing right above him. She nudged him gently to get his attention. He looked up to meet her gaze. "You know you'll have to leave that spot eventually," Astrid said. Hiccup shrugged. "When?" he asked. "Eventually," Astrid replied.

There was an awkward silence before Astrid reached her hand out to help Hiccup stand up. Hiccup looked at her hand, and started to reach out for it. But then he stopped, realizing what Astrid wanted. He looked up at her and found himself lost in her beautiful blue eyes. Without hesitation, he took her hand, and she helped him to his feet. Well, foot and a half.

They refused to let go of the other's hand as they stared into each other's eyes. Hiccup suddenly took Astrid in his arms and hugged her tightly. Astrid hugged him back gently. "I'm sorry, Astrid," Hiccup said, "If I had known how everyone would react when they saw Mortem, then we wouldn't have..." Astrid shushed him. "It's not your fault, Hiccup," she said, "You didn't know how they would view him. You can't blame yourself for everything, you know." Hiccup hugged her tighter, with no intention of letting go.

Astrid gently pulled out of the embrace, her blue eyes meeting his green ones. "I know that we'll find some way for it to work out," she said, "Just try not to be so worried. You didn't do anything wrong." Hiccup gave her a small smile. "You know, you're actually starting to sound like me," he said. Astrid smiled back at him. They held each other in their arms for what seemed like forever. Astrid then leaned in and connected her forehead with his. "I love you, Hiccup," she said. Hiccup's smile widened. "I love you too, Astrid," he said. The two smiled at each other, now with all of their problems behind them for the moment. As if reading each other's minds, they both leaned forward and met each other halfway with a passionate kiss.

The kiss seemed to last forever, and neither of them wanted it to end. They seemed to get more and more passionate as they kissed, and they both enjoyed it. After several minutes, they both broke the kiss, and their eyes met. To them, nothing seemed to be more important than being with the one they loved the most. Hiccup lifted his hand to Astrid's cheek, and stroked it gently with his thumb. "I love you," he said, "More than anything in my life." Astrid's smile widened at his gentle touch, and his even gentler words. "I love you too," she said, "More than anything in my life." Hiccup became even happier when he heard her gentle words. He started to lean in, and

Astrid met him halfway with a longer, and more passionate kiss than the one before.

Neither of them noticed the dragons, all smiling as they watched the two of them kiss.

"_I love you, Astrid._"

"_I love you too, Hiccup._"

* * *

><p>What do you think? Will they be able to prove that Mortem is a good dragon? Stay tuned, and in the meantime, leave a review!

11. Chapter 11

Chapter 11:

Now for the test that will prove that Mortem is a good dragon! And please don't be too mad at Stoick, he is overprotective after all. Mortem being a Red Death means danger and evil to him. But he'll be proven wrong after this, I promise!

* * *

><p>As much as Mortem wanted to prove that he was a good dragon, there were still many things that he didn't know about. Sometimes, he couldn't even tell the difference between right and wrong. Plus, it didn't help that Stoick said he'd kill Mortem if something went wrong.<p>

Hiccup stayed at the academy overnight to talk with Mortem, and train him some more. Mortem didn't like being alone, and it was nice to have some company for the night.

"We'll start with weapons," Hiccup said, "And why you should avoid them." He picked up a heavy barrel full of axes, maces and swords. The weight of the barrel nearly made him fall to the ground. He somehow managed to dump the contents on the ground, in front of Mortem. Mortem curiously looked at the weapons. He grabbed a mace in his claws and stuck it in his mouth.

"Mortem, no!" Hiccup said, reaching into the dragon's mouth and pulling out the mace. "Don't eat that," he told the dragonet, "That's bad. You'll hurt yourself." Toothless walked up to Mortem, and whacked him with his tail. Hiccup let out a frustrated sigh. "Toothless, stop picking on Mortem," he said, "How would you feel if he was shoving you?" Toothless looked down at the ground, feeling guilty.

Hiccup sighed again and walked over to his friend. "I know that you're trying to help," he said to Toothless, "But punishing Mortem isn't going to teach him anything. We have to be gentle with him, okay?" Toothless looked at Hiccup and nodded.

Soon Mortem was recognizing the weapons by name, and he learned each weapon's purpose. All three could be thrown, swung, or used for

slashing or crushing. They all did their own amount of damage. Mortem cringed at the thought of a mace being clubbed down on his feet, or an axe or sword slashing as his heart. He knew all too well to avoid these dangerous objects.

Next, he learned about all the different dragons living on the island. There was Toothless, the Night Fury, who he already had gotten to know a bit. He recognized Stormfly as Astrid's Deadly Nadder. When he heard Hiccup mention the name 'Hookfang,' it made him shiver with fright. He later figured out that was the name of Snotlout's Monstrous Nightmare. The name of the dragon species made him even more frightened. He knew right away that Hookfang wasn't a dragon that you'd want to make angry. You wouldn't like him when he was angry. That left Meatlug and Barf and Belch. It was easy to tell that the Gronkle was Meatlug, but Mortem had a hard time figuring out which one of the Zippleback heads was Barf, and the other was Belch. Oh well, he'd figure it out eventually.

* * *

><p>Mortem rested in a corner of the academy as he watched Hiccup write notes in his notebook. Maybe someday he'd be able to write and draw like his 'father.' He decided that would be another thing he'd train himself to do. He noticed Toothless walking up to him, a guilty look on his face.<p>

"_What is it, Uncle Toothless?_" Mortem asked. Toothless wanted to roll his eyes, but he stopped himself. "_I want to apologize for hitting you earlier,_" he said, "_When I was working for the Queen, it was either do what you're told, or be punished. I'm sorry, Mortem._" Mortem listened carefully, and suddenly realized something. "_You called me by my name,_" he said softly. "_Of course I did,_" Toothless said, "_Do you want me to call you something else?_" "_No, thank you, 'Mortem' is fine,_" Mortem said, "_They've called me worse things all day._"

Hiccup stopped writing notes and watched the two dragons talk. Although he couldn't understand what they were saying, he could tell by their reactions that they were really starting to get along. He smiled. He was about to continue writing notes when he heard Astrid's voice. "Hey, Hiccup."

Hiccup hadn't been more startled in his whole life. He screamed and clutched his notebook to his chest, as if he were trying to protect himself. He sighed. "Astrid, stop doing that!" he said. Astrid shrugged and sat next to him. "Sorry," she said, "I didn't think that I would scare you that much." "Well, guess what? You did." Hiccup said, with a hint of sarcasm in his voice. Astrid laughed.

Hiccup turned to look at her. "What's so funny?" he asked. "You," Astrid replied. "Me?" Hiccup asked. "Yeah, your...sarcasm, it's actually kind of funny," Astrid said. Hiccup's face lit up. "Really?" he asked. Astrid smiled at him. "Yes," she said. Hiccup smiled back at her. He set his notebook on the ground next to him, and then turned to look at Astrid. "So, what are you doing here?" he asked. "I wanted to check on you before I went to bed," Astrid said, "It makes me feel better knowing that you're okay." Hiccup moved his hand so that it rested on hers. "Good to know," he said simply.

The two of them sat there, smiling at one another. The moon slowly

rose into the sky, lighting up their faces. Hiccup was amazed. By herself, Astrid was very beautiful, but in the moonlight, she was even more so. Her eyes lit up in the moonlight, making her more beautiful than ever. Hiccup didn't notice, but the moonlight was also having an effect on his own appearance. His eyes had lit up just as much as Astrid's did, and the moonlight shining on his face made Astrid want to be there with him the entire night.

Hiccup sighed. "You look beautiful," he said. "Thanks," Astrid said, "You look pretty nice yourself." "Thanks," Hiccup said.

They sat there for what seemed like forever. Hiccup smiled at Astrid's beauty. Of course, that wasn't the only thing that he loved about her. He loved her for who she was, and Astrid loved him the same way. Neither of them noticed the other leaning in until their faces were at least one inch apart. They both stopped, slightly embarrassed. Mostly because he wanted to, and because he was getting a little impatient, Hiccup closed the gap between them and pressed his lips against Astrid's. Astrid, loving that he had initiated, kissed him back. Hiccup wrapped his arms around Astrid's waist and pulled her closer. He felt Astrid smile in the kiss as she wrapped her own arms around his neck. It seemed like the kiss had lasted for hours, and it probably would have if Mortem hadn't groaned in disgust. He had gotten tired of seeing the two of them getting more and more affectionate, and he was trying to cover his six eyes with his front paws.

Astrid and Hiccup both pulled out of the kiss, their eyes seemed to be shining brighter than before. Astrid pulled out of the embrace and stood up slowly. "I should go," she said, "My parents will be wondering where I am." Hiccup watched as she made her way to the exit. He stood up. "Wait!" he called out to her. Astrid turned to see him walking over to her. He wrapped his arms around her. Astrid hugged him back. They both sighed. They both wished that they could stay forever in each other's arms, never able to let go. "I love you," they both said in unison. They were surprised at first, but then their expressions changed. They smiled and tightened the hug before pulling apart. They shared one last kiss before Astrid left the academy.

* * *

><p>Mortem had liked seeing his 'parents' show how much they loved each other, but to him there was such a thing as getting too passionate. He didn't know that he could feel the way he did when he didn't want to see them kissing anymore. He wondered if that feeling was normal.<p>

He had learned a lot about what to do and what not to do, and he felt like there was still more to learn. The island was full of dragons, but Toothless was the only Night Fury. Did that mean that Toothless was the last of his kind? Mortem didn't want Toothless to be left alone while all the other dragons found their mates, it seemed really unfair. He promised himself that one day, he would find his friend another Night Fury to mate with.

He realized then that finding his friend a mate was a good thing to do. Compassion. Somehow that word came into his head, and he realized that he was doing that. He was treating his family the way that he wanted to be treated. They had helped him, and he hoped that he would

one day be able to repay them for their kindness. Nothing seemed more important to him than being a part of a family, and doing what he could to return their affection.

He was indeed, a very good dragon.

* * *

><p>Mortem learned a lot in this chapter. But is it enough? Stay tuned, because the next chapter will have an unexpected twist. Guess what group is back! Hint: They've come for Mortem. Review, follow, or favorite!

12. Chapter 12

Chapter 12:

****Guess who's coming for Mortem...****

* * *

><p>An unfamiliar Viking ship was sailing toward Berk. It wasn't one of their ships. The sail of the ship was bearing a sign that was different from Berk's. It was an Outcast ship. There were two other ships like it sailing behind, forming a group. On the ship in front, was the leader of the Outcasts. Alvin the Treacherous.<p>

"I can almost smell it," Alvin said, "The Red Death." The Outcasts had somehow heard of Mortem, and they would stop at nothing until they had him.

* * *

><p>Unaware of the approaching danger, Hiccup had decided to take Mortem out on a walk around the village. Hopefully, Mortem's obedience would help prove that he was a good dragon. Unfortunately, whenever a Viking saw Mortem coming, they would turn and run. After a while, all of the Vikings were inside their houses. The village was unusually empty. Mortem felt guilty. "It's not your fault," Hiccup said.<p>

Mortem and Hiccup stopped for a rest, Toothless was nowhere to be seen. He had disappeared early that morning, and hadn't been seen since. Hiccup had noticed, but he pretended it was no big deal.

Mortem didn't know what to think. He knew that he was a good dragon, but why did everyone think that he was bad? He didn't know it, but Mortem was going through a situation similar to when Hiccup was treated like an outcast. Nobody liked him, let alone wanted to be anywhere near him. But there was a difference between Hiccup's problems and Mortem's problems. Mortem had loved ones to comfort him, but Hiccup hadn't had anyone to talk to.

Mortem knew that he was a dragon, and that all of the other Vikings were afraid of whatever species he was, but he still viewed Astrid and Hiccup as his parents. They were the only people, besides Toothless and Stormfly, that he could look to for help. So what if he was different? So what if his 'parents' were human? So long as he was

happy, that was what mattered.

Unfortunately for Mortem, he still wasn't trusted by Stoick. It seemed as though the chief was worried that Mortem would cause trouble whenever their backs were turned. But Mortem knew right from wrong, thanks to the extra training that he had a few nights ago. He knew what to avoid, and what was on the island living alongside him. Either Stoick refused to see that, or he didn't want anyone to notice that he was slowly changing his mind about Mortem.

Like Mortem, Hiccup was lost in thought. He was also thinking about how Stoick would treat Mortem now that he had been trained further. He was also worried about what would happen if Mortem screwed up, and ended up getting killed because of it. His thoughts were also secretly on Astrid. Before Mortem's revelation, Stoick had told Hiccup that he should ask Astrid to marry him. But should he? It was true, they loved each other, but Hiccup wasn't sure that either of them were ready.

With nothing else to do, Hiccup decided to take Mortem back to the academy. Mortem felt safe at the academy, because of the bars that kept out attackers. Unfortunately, it didn't help if the attackers were inside the academy.

The other teens were at the academy when Hiccup and Mortem arrived. Mortem felt uneasy about Snotlout, the Twins, and their dragons. As soon as he was let off of the leash, he went into a faraway corner, away from the bullies. That didn't help much, though.

"If that thing comes anywhere near our dragons, I'll bring a mace down on its head," Snotlout boasted. "He has a name," Hiccup said, "And it's Mortem." "Whatever," Snotlout said indifferently, "But still!" "Shut up, Snotlout," came a voice. Hiccup turned to see Astrid with Stormfly. "Mortem is no different from any other dragon on this island," Astrid continued, "He has feelings you know." "Yeah, so what?" Snotlout asked. Astrid walked over and stood next to Hiccup. "So, if you were smart," she said, "You'd know better than to do anything violent to him." Hiccup nodded. "You can't treat our son like that," he said, "And we won't let you." Astrid agreed.

Snotlout rolled his eyes. "Okay," he said, "A: He's not your son. Calling Mortem your son is like saying Hookfang is my brother. And two, there is no way that you guys can tell me what to do around here, because you can't!" Astrid sighed. "You're making it very difficult to not call Stormfly over here, and ask her to tear you apart," she said through gritted teeth. Snotlout gave a sideways glance before sidestepping away from the angry Valkyrie.

Hiccup looked at Astrid and smiled. He would never admit it, but Astrid's toughness was another thing that he loved about her. Even when she was angry. Any Viking who made her angry knew not to mess with her. And he seemed to be the only one who knew how to calm her down.

Just then, there was a loud, familiar roar. Hiccup and Astrid turned to see Toothless bounding into the academy. "Toothless, what's wrong?" Hiccup asked. Toothless gestured for Hiccup to climb on his back. Hiccup did so. Astrid ran over to Stormfly and mounted her. Both dragons took off and left the academy. Mortem watched his 'parents' leave. Not wanting to be alone with the bullies, he spread

his wings and took off after them.

* * *

><p>Hiccup didn't know what had caused Toothless to become so ramped up, nor did he know where Toothless was taking him. They were flying over the ocean, away from the island of Berk. He heard a distant cry, and turned to see that Mortem was following them. Toothless suddenly stopped, and flew into the clouds. Hiccup was barely able to see, but he was able to make out the outline of a group of Viking ships. He could just see the ship's symbol. The Outcast symbol. The Outcasts were coming to Berk.<p>

Mortem flew closer to the ships, and suddenly recognized the people on board. They were the same Vikings from his dream. _They've come for me!_ he realized, and flew up into the clouds. Astrid noticed them, and steered Stormfly up into the clouds as well.

"What does Alvin want?" she asked. "I don't know," Hiccup said, "But I think we'll soon find out. First, we have to get back to Berk and warn everyone." Astrid nodded, and they both turned and headed back home. Mortem, frozen with fear, took a minute to regain his senses before flying after them.

* * *

><p>"Alvin is back?!" Stoick shouted. Hiccup had just told him that the Outcasts were coming to Berk, for a reason he didn't know. "I saw it, Dad," Hiccup said, "He's headed our way." "But what could he want?" Stoick asked. Hiccup's eyes widened. "Mortem," he whispered under his breath. He didn't know how Alvin could have heard of Mortem, but what else would he want? "What?" Stoick asked. He had not heard what Hiccup had said. "I think Alvin wants Mortem," Hiccup said. Stoick nodded. "It makes sense," he said to himself. He turned to Hiccup. "Go get the others," he said. Hiccup nodded and ran to the academy.<p>

* * *

><p>In no time at all, the teens had mounted their dragons, and were headed in the direction of Alvin's ships. "You really think that he wants Mortem?" Astrid asked. "Why else would he come to Berk?" Hiccup asked. Astrid shrugged. "What's confusing is how they even found out about Mortem in the first place," Hiccup said. "I'm just as confused as you are," Astrid replied. "That's a little comforting to know," Hiccup said. They both looked at each other and smiled. "Excuse me," Snotlout interrupted, "But have you guys forgotten that we're all right behind you?" Hiccup and Astrid both sighed. "Mood ruiner," Astrid muttered under her breath. Nobody noticed, but Mortem was flying behind all of them, following his 'parents.'<p>

It wasn't long before the Outcast ships were in view. "There they are," Hiccup said, pointing. "Okay, what's the plan?" asked a very nervous Fishlegs. "Split up," Hiccup said, "Take them by surprise. Whatever you do, make sure that they don't get to Berk!" The teens nodded and split up. Astrid stayed with Hiccup. "What are you doing?" Hiccup asked. "I'm going with you," Astrid said, "Just in case you do anything stupid." "Astrid," Hiccup said, "If more than one of us goes, we'll be seen. You can't come with me." "I don't care if they see us," Astrid said, "I said that I didn't want to lose you, so I'm

not going to let it happen. No matter what." Hiccup shook his head. "I have to go alone," he said.

Astrid couldn't believe what Hiccup was doing. "Is this some kind of game to you?" she asked. "No," Hiccup said simply. "Are you trying to prove yourself again?" Astrid asked. "No!" Hiccup said again. "Then what is it?" Astrid asked, her anger building. "I don't want to lose you, Astrid!" Hiccup shouted. Astrid didn't respond, she was too shocked to answer. Hiccup sighed, and calmed down. "I never wanted to lose you," he said softly, "You mean everything to me, if not less." He steered Toothless closer to Astrid and Stormfly, and held out his hand. Astrid took it. Hiccup gently rubbed the back of Astrid's hand with his thumb. "I love you," he said softly. Astrid gave him a small smile. "I love you too," she said. Toothless and Stormfly exchanged knowing looks.

Hiccup and Astrid let go of each other's hand and steered their dragons in the direction of the Outcast ships. Nothing was going to keep them apart.

"Fire!" Hiccup shouted. Both Toothless and Stormfly shot fire at the Outcast ships. One of the ships caught fire and sank, the crew aboard it jumped into the water to douse the flames on their clothes. Many of the crew managed to get on one of the other two ships, but some of the members weren't so lucky. They were dragged under the water and eaten by a pack of wild Scauldrons. "Direct hit!" Astrid said happily.

The other teens all swooped down in different directions, aiming their shots at the ships. Many of the shots missed. It was then that Hiccup heard a familiar roar. Mortem! He was swooping down on the Outcasts, just as everyone else had done. "Mortem, no!" Hiccup shouted. But his warning came too late. Alvin fired a crossbow, which embedded itself deep into Mortem's back. The dragonet cried out in pain. Another crossbow fired off of the other ship, and embedded in Mortem's back, next to the first one. Mortem cried out again.

Alvin and the other members on both ships grabbed the chains attached to the crossbows and pulled. Despite being so big and strong, Mortem was weakened by his injuries, and was slowly being pulled down to the Outcast boats. Hiccup urged Toothless forward, charging at the ship that had Alvin on board. But Alvin still had a trick up his sleeve. With a simple hand signal, he ordered two crew members to release a pack of Changewings from below deck. Once the Changewings were free, they flew angrily at the Night Fury. Hiccup quickly urged Toothless to pull up. The Changewings continued to chase them. Hiccup could do nothing but watch as Mortem was dragged down to the Outcast ships.

Alvin laughed at the sight of Hiccup being chased by angry Changewings, and the fact that he now had the Red Death for himself to train. His plan was to use Mortem to destroy Berk, and he wouldn't stop until he got what he wanted. He and the crew on both ships wrapped the chains around the masts tightly, so that Mortem couldn't escape. Weakened by his wounds, Mortem couldn't break the chains. He settled in the water, fighting to keep his head above the surface. "Let's head on home," Alvin said, "To Outcast Island." The crew nodded, and turned the ships around, in the direction of Outcast Island. Helpless, Mortem could do nothing but swim alongside the ships, toward the island of his nightmares.

* * *

><p>By the time Hiccup and Toothless escaped the Changewings, Mortem was gone. Alvin had taken him. Hiccup looked out at the horizon, in the direction of Outcast Island, tears in his eyes. His son was gone. He had been unable to do anything to help as Mortem was taken away. He turned at the sound of flapping wings, and saw Stoick flying toward them on his Thunderdrum, Thornado.<p>

Stoick had seen everything that had happened to Mortem, and was able to drive away the Changewings with the help of Thornado's loud supersonic roar. He had realized that everything that Hiccup had said about Mortem was true.

"I was wrong about Mortem," Stoick said to his son. Hiccup looked at Stoick, shocked. "He's a good dragon, Hiccup," Stoick continued, "And that's because you raised him so well. We'll get him back, I promise." He turned Thornado in the direction of Berk. Hiccup watched as his dad left. Stoick had realized the truth about Mortem, but all too late. He turned to his left to see Astrid and Stormfly hovering next to him. "We'll get him back," Astrid said gently. Hiccup nodded, and the two of them flew off to Berk. They had a lot of preparing to do, if they were going to Outcast Island. Hiccup hoped that they would be able to prepare in time for them to save Mortem before it was too late.

* * *

><p>Mortem got taken! Will they be able to save him? And will Mortem be able to fight against the Outcasts? Review, favorite, or follow!

13. Chapter 13

Chapter 13:

I know that some of you probably want to kill Alvin right now, but don't worry. The villains always lose, remember. And in this chapter, Mortem is about to make some new friends. Guess who's back!

* * *

><p>Mortem had never been more terrified in his life. They had arrived at Outcast Island. It had been a very long swim, and there was no stop for a rest. He was dragged to the shore, where he was surrounded by the Outcasts. This is starting to look familiar, Mortem thought to himself.

Alvin jumped off of the ship and turned to one of his henchmen. "Take 'im to the cages," he said, "We train 'im to kill in the mornin'." Mortem froze. _My nightmare!_ he thought. He was suddenly being dragged to a sort of prison, that was holding captive a whole bunch of foreign dragons. Changewings, Scauldrons, Whispering Deaths, there were even a few Typhoomerangs. One group of dragons were all in the same pen. It was a family of Typhoomerangs, a mother and three babies. One of the babies was blue, one was yellow, and the other was orange. The mother was red, both physically and mentally. She roared as the Outcasts passed her cage.

Mortem was brought to the biggest cage, which had heavy chains attached to the wall. The Outcasts chained Mortem and left the cage, leaving him all alone. Mortem desperately tried to break the chains, but due to his wounds, he wasn't strong enough to break them. He tried again. No progress. He kept trying, but each try was worthless. The chains wouldn't break. _It's my nightmare come true,_ Mortem thought as he let out a cry for help.

* * *

><p>"You're WHAT!"<p>

Astrid couldn't have been more frustrated. Hiccup had decided that he would go and find a way to rescue Mortem, all by himself. "I'm going to go save Mortem," he said again as he packed some stuff into Toothless's saddle bag.

Astrid shook her head. "Oh no," she said, "No, no, no, no, no, no, no! There is no way you're going alone!" "Guess what?" Hiccup said, "I am." "That's a relief to hear," Snotlout said, happy that Hiccup was leaving. He and the others were standing nearby, watching what was taking place. "No," Astrid said, "Don't encourage him! Hiccup, this is crazy!" "Living on a dangerous island crazy, or teaching the other teenagers how to train dragons crazy?" Hiccup asked as he tightened the saddle. "I don't know!" Astrid shouted, "Neither!" "That's a relief," Hiccup said as he mounted Toothless.

"Hiccup, that's not what I meant!" Astrid said. "Then what did you mean?" Hiccup asked. "I meant that this is beyond any of the crazy things you have done in the past!" Astrid said, "And don't say anything Snotlout!" "How would you feel if you were finally getting rid of someone you didn't like?" Snotlout asked. That's when Astrid lost it. "HAVE I BEEN EATING DRAGON NIP AGAIN?! YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM!" "Right now, my only concern is to get Mortem out of there!" Hiccup said, "Hopefully before they do anything to him." "Why are you going alone?!" Astrid half-asked, half-yelled. "Why, do you want to come with me?" Hiccup asked. "Yes, I do," Astrid said. "Why?" Hiccup asked. Astrid didn't answer. "WHY?!" Hiccup asked again. "BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU, AND BECAUSE I LOVE YOU!" Astrid blurted out.

Hiccup hadn't expected Astrid to blurt out her feelings like that, especially in front of the other teens. "You _what_?" both Tuffnut and Ruffnut asked in unison. Astrid hung her head in embarrassment. "I love him," she whispered. Snotlout's reaction was both of shock and jealousy.

Hiccup sighed quietly. "I love you too, Astrid," he said, "But if you came with me, and something happened to you, I'd never forgive myself. I have to go alone this time. I'm sorry." He nudged Toothless, and the Night Fury unwillingly took off from the ground.

Astrid looked up and watched as her boyfriend and his Night Fury disappeared from her sight.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Mortem was tired from all the tugging on the chains,

and he had sat down to rest. It was nighttime, and he was exhausted. But he didn't want to sleep just yet. Not while he was in such a horrid place. Just then, a voice came from the shadows. "I know how you feel," it said.

Mortem looked up and around the cage, and noticed a dark figure hiding in a corner. He wondered why he hadn't noticed it before. "_What are you?_" he asked. The figure moved out of the shadows. It was a Night Fury. A female Night Fury. She looked a lot like Toothless, only she had a white mark on her head that looked a lot like a star. "_Who are you?_" Mortem asked. "_My name is Starlight,_" the Night Fury said, "_And you're obviously a Red Death._" "_Yes,_" Mortem said, "_Is that a bad thing?_" "_Usually a Red Death is mean and evil,_" said Starlight, "_But you're obviously you're a lot different than that. You're kind and curious. Not like the Dragon Queen before she died._" "_Who is the Dragon Queen?_" Mortem asked. Starlight sighed. "_The Dragon Queen was your mother,_" she said.

Now Mortem was confused. His mother had been mean and evil? "_If she's my mother,_" he said, "_Then how come I'm not mean and evil?_" "_Obviously because you have been raised by someone with a kind heart,_" Starlight said, "_Someone who wanted to prove that not all dragons are bad._" Mortem nodded. "_I guess Hiccup is like that,_" he said. Starlight's eyes widened. "_Hiccup?_" she asked, "_As in Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III? The Dragon Trainer?_" Mortem was confused. "_I guess so,_" he said, "_Why?_" "_Hiccup is the Legendary Dragon Trainer!_" Starlight said, "_He's the one who destroyed the Dragon Queen and brought peace between the dragons and Vikings!_" "_He killed my mother?_" Mortem asked.

Starlight sighed. "_He had to,_" she said, "_It was for the sake of the world. Your mother was evil beyond compare. She had to be killed. She was a monster. A beast that no one could tame or control. She was our dictator. Our executioner. Our tyrant. She was the mother of all dragons. I'm sorry, Little One, but she had to be killed._" Mortem shrugged. "_I don't mind,_" he said, "_I probably would have killed her too._" "_You wouldn't be alive if you killed her,_" Starlight said, "_You'd need her to raise you, if it hadn't been for the Legendary Dragon Trainer._" "_What about my father?_" Mortem asked, "_Don't I have a father?_"

Starlight sighed again. "_You don't have a father,_" she said, "_Red Deaths reproduce without mates. Both male and females lay the eggs. They are asexual reproducers. You don't need a mate to lay an egg, Little One._" "'_Little One?_'_" Mortem asked. "_That's what I like to call you,_" Starlight said. "_My name is Mortem,_" Mortem said. "_It's nice to meet you Mortem,_" came a voice, and it didn't come from Starlight.

Mortem looked outside the cage to see the orange Typhoomerang from earlier. The little dragon squeezed himself through the bars and into Mortem and Starlight's cage. "_You know it's dangerous to escape from your cage, young one,_" Starlight said, "_The Outcasts could catch you._" "_Don't worry,_" the young dragon said as he moved to sit by Mortem, "_I always make sure that they don't catch me._"

Starlight sighed again and lay down. "_Sleep, young ones,_" she said, "_You'll need your rest._" Mortem lay down. He then remembered his promise to help Toothless find a mate. "_Do you know a Night Fury

named Toothless?" he asked Starlight. "_You mean Shadow?" Starlight asked, "_That's his real name._" "_Yes, him,_" Mortem said, "_Do you like him? I promised myself that I would find him a mate so that he won't be lonely." Starlight nodded. "_I do know him,_" she said, "_He's my boyfriend. I've had a crush on him for quite a long time. I'd love to be his mate, if that's what you want._" Mortem nodded. "_That is what I want,_" he said, "_But I'm not sure if that's what he wants._" "_Trust me when I say that he would be happy to have me as his mate._" Starlight said. She then closed her eyes and went to sleep.

The little Typhoomerang lay down and settled next to Mortem. "_I've always wanted a friend,_" he said, "_And I know that you'll be a good one._" Mortem gave a slight nod. "_And I know that you'll be a great friend to me too._" he said. He then settled in and started to drift off to sleep.

"_By the way,_" said the young Typhoomerang as they both drifted off the sleep, "_My name is Torch._"

* * *

><p>Torch is back! And Mortem found a female Night Fury! Do you think that the three friends will be able to escape? And is Hiccup really going to save Mortem all by himself? Review, follow, or favorite!

14. Chapter 14

Chapter 14:

If you remember in the last chapter, Hiccup was going to rescue Mortem alone. But is he really alone? This is happening while Mortem is meeting Starlight and Torch.

* * *

><p>Hiccup and Toothless had lost sight of the island of Berk not long after they took off to save Mortem. The plan was to sneak in and escape with Mortem, but as he got closer to Outcast Island, he began to doubt his 'plan' would work.<p>

By sundown, Outcast Island still wasn't in their sights. It was a lot longer flight than Hiccup remembered. Toothless needed to rest. Hiccup looked around and saw what looked like another island in the distance. _We'll rest there,_" he decided. He steered Toothless in the direction of the island.

When they landed on the cliff overlooking the island, Toothless fell asleep. Hiccup climbed down from his back, careful not to wake him. He then sat down, leaning back against Toothless. Toothless stirred, and then opened one eye and looked at Hiccup. Hiccup sighed, not noticing that Toothless was awake. Toothless crooned softly. Hiccup turned to see that Toothless had woken up, and was giving him a worried look.

Hiccup sighed again. "I guess I'm just thinking about when we left to help Mortem," he said, "I probably shouldn't have just left without a fool-proof plan, I mean, Astrid was right. I was being a crazy

idiot." He paused, and then he whispered, "I miss her."

Toothless crooned sadly. He didn't like it when his friend was unhappy. Hiccup gave Toothless a small smile. "At least you understand," he said, "But sometimes I wish you could actually talk." "_And I wish that you could understand me,_" Toothless said. He fell asleep again, wrapping his tail around Hiccup. Hiccup's smile widened as he pet Toothless's tail gently.

Just then, Hiccup thought that he heard someone call his name. He looked around. There was no one on the island. _Probably just my imagination, he thought, as he started to doze off. But then he heard it again, louder this time. He looked around again. Still nothing. He heard it again, and this time, he realized that it was coming from the way he and Toothless had come. He looked out, and saw the silhouette of a Deadly Nadder with someone riding on its back. He stood up slowly, careful not to wake up Toothless.

As the dragon and its rider came closer, Hiccup began to recognize who they were. It was none other than Astrid riding on Stormfly. He couldn't believe it. Astrid had followed him and Toothless after they had left. He had looked back so many times, and he hadn't noticed that he was being followed. Astrid and Stormfly might have hidden in the clouds, following him and Toothless without him knowing.

Hiccup watched as Stormfly landed on the edge of the cliff where he and Toothless had landed. Astrid jumped off of her back. For a while, no one moved, neither person nor dragon. Hiccup cautiously took a step forward. "Astrid?" he asked. Astrid didn't respond. Then, without warning, she ran over to him. Hiccup broke into a run as well. When she reached him, Astrid threw her arms around him and hugged him tightly. Hiccup hugged her back. "I can't believe it's you," Hiccup said, "What are you doing here?"

Astrid pulled out of the embrace and looked at him. "I'm coming with you," she said. "What?" Hiccup said, "No, no, no, no, no! This is crazy!" "How crazy?" Astrid asked. "I don't know, and right now, I don't care!" Hiccup said, "I told you back on Berk that I can't afford to lose you, and I meant that." "Well, I can't afford to lose you either!" Astrid shouted. Hiccup sighed frustratedly. "Look," he said, "I've cared about you longer than you've ever cared about me, and I'll admit that that's mostly my fault. If I had been eaten by a dragon, you probably wouldn't've cared that much, or at least that's what I assumed. You probably hated me as much as I loved you. And you know what kept me going? What made me keep getting up and trying again, even though I seemed to know that I would fail?" He paused, and stared deeply into Astrid's ocean blue eyes. "It was you," he said.

Astrid's eyes widened. She had been listening to every word Hiccup was saying. After everything she had done to stay away from him, or to keep him away from her, and he had done all of the things he did because he loved her. She stood motionless for a minute before hugging him tightly. Hiccup was temporarily shocked. He slowly wrapped his arms around her and hugged her back.

"I only wanted to help," Astrid said softly, "It pained me to see you go by yourself, so I followed you. The truth is, I want more than anything to be with you. You make me happy." Hiccup felt his heart grow warm. He made her happy. He did his best to hold back tears as

he tightened the embrace. "You make me happy too, Astrid," he said. "I know," Astrid said softly. They stayed in each other's arms for what seemed like forever. Hiccup still couldn't believe that Astrid had followed him all that way, just to be with him. To help him save Mortem.

Astrid sighed and pulled out of the embrace. "Listen," she said, "There were some things that I probably shouldn't've said back there. I'm sorry." "No, I'm sorry," Hiccup said, "I didn't really think about what I was doing. I'm sure that I made myself look like an idiot." "You're not an idiot, Hiccup," Astrid said, "You were just doing what any parent would do if they lost their kid." "But Mortem isn't really my son," Hiccup said, "I just raised him because he needed me." "Is that you talking, or Snotlout?" Astrid asked. Hiccup didn't answer.

Astrid sighed, and then hugged Hiccup again. Hiccup gently hugged her back. "Just because Mortem is a dragon doesn't mean he's not your son," Astrid said, "You care about him a lot, and I do too. He's our son, and we're going to save him-together." Hiccup sighed. "You're right," he said, "We'll get him back-together."

* * *

><p>They had decided to rest on the island that night. Despite the fact that he was really tired, Hiccup couldn't sleep. It was late at night, but he couldn't seem to relax. He kept thinking about Astrid, and what Stoick had said about asking her to marry him. It was true, Hiccup wanted to marry her, but he was afraid that either she would say no, or that neither of them would be ready. He looked at Astrid, who was fast asleep. He slowly got up, and walked into a nearby forest. He walked until he found a small flower. It was a simple flower, not very pretty, but not very plain. Hiccup sighed as he reached down, and picked it.<p>

"Ask her...Ask her not..." He pulled off the petals one by one, saying those two things over and over. It seemed ridiculous to him at the time, but he felt like there wasn't much that he could do. He continued to pull off the petals. "Ask her...Ask her not...Ask her...Ask her not..." The last petal. He pulled it off and clutched it tightly in his hand. "I ask her," he said to himself. He got up, and went back to the cliff.

He slowly approached Astrid, being careful not to wake up Stormfly. She looked so beautiful. Not that she never was. He bent down over her, and put his hand on her shoulder. He shook her gently. "Astrid," he said quietly, "Wake up." Astrid opened her eyes. "Hiccup?" she asked. "Astrid, I need to talk to you," Hiccup whispered. "Now?" Astrid asked. "Yes, now," Hiccup replied. Astrid groaned, but she got up. Hiccup took her hand in his own and led her into the forest

Hiccup was nervous about how Astrid would respond. He wanted it to work out, but he knew that it didn't always work out that way. He suddenly remembered finding something interesting while he was in the forest earlier. He led Astrid through the forest until they found a field of flowers. Astrid was amazed. She had never seen so many beautiful flowers. Then again, she usually didn't see many flowers.

"How did you find this place?" she asked. "I was taking a walk, and I just happened upon it," Hiccup replied. Astrid let go of his hand and walked out into the field. "It's so beautiful," she said. She got down on her knees to get a better look at the flowers. They were bluebells, and they were very pretty. Hiccup walked up to Astrid and knelt down beside her. He looked around, and noticed a strange flower hidden among the bluebells. He took a closer look, and recognized what it was. It was an aster.

Hiccup picked the flower and held it out to Astrid. "Hiccup, is that...?" she asked. "I just found it," Hiccup said, "It's for you."

Astrid took the flower from Hiccup. It was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. She put the flower in her hair. Hiccup smiled at her. Then he stood up and held out his hand. Astrid took it. Hiccup helped her stand up. "I need to talk to you," he said. "About what?" Astrid asked. "Us," Hiccup replied. "Us?" Astrid asked. "Yeah. You, me, together. Us," Hiccup said. Astrid nodded.

Hiccup took a deep breath. "Listen," he said, "I know that we've known each other for a while, and most of that time, you didn't like me. I thought that I had to change who I was to get you to like me, but now I realize that I was wrong. You appreciate me for who I am, and I've always appreciated you. The truth is, I've always loved you, and I know that I always will." "I know how you feel about me," Astrid said, "And I love you too." Hiccup sighed. "Look, I'm just gonna cut to the chase," he said, "Before we showed Mortem to everyone in the village, my dad had a talk with me. He said that he was expecting me to do something I hadn't really thought about doing. I wasn't sure if I wanted to, but now I know that I do." He took Astrid's hand in his own, and knelt down on one knee. "Astrid Hofferson," he said, "When the time is right, when we both know that we're ready..." he paused, before finally asking her, "...Will you marry me?"

Astrid wasn't just surprised. She was shocked. Hiccup had asked her the one thing that she had no intention of answering for most of her life. But now, it was what she had wanted to hear. She knelt down and hugged him tightly. Hiccup returned the embrace. "I thought that you would never ask me that question, Hiccup," Astrid said. "Does that mean that you will?" Hiccup asked. Astrid pulled out of the embrace, and looked into his emerald green eyes. "Yes," she said with a smile. She then leaned in and kissed him. Hiccup almost melted in her arms as he kissed her back. She had said yes! He couldn't remember a time when he was as happy as he was now.

It seemed like days before they broke the kiss. They stared into each other's eyes for what seemed like forever. "I love you," Hiccup said. "I love you too," Astrid replied. They both meant every one of those words. They both leaned in for another kiss.

* * *

><p>Minutes later, both of the young lovers were back on the cliff, lying down in each other's arms. Both of them wished that they could stay that way forever. Hiccup looked at his fiancée. She was asleep, and the aster was still in her hair. Moving slowly, Hiccup reached for the flower, and untangled it. He set it on the ground beside her. Astrid suddenly moved. Hiccup froze as she snuggled into his embrace.

"I love you," she muttered. Hiccup smiled, gave her a kiss, and held her close. "I love you too," he said before drifting off to sleep.<p>

* * *

><p>I was planning on taking it slow, but a friend of mine told me that she would like it if they got married, so I decided to go along with her wish. Leave a review and tell me if you liked this chapter.

15. Chapter 15

Chapter 15:

****Now back to Mortem.****

* * *

><p>Mortem barely made it through the first night. But thanks to Starlight and Torch, he was able to stay calm enough to fall asleep. He was happy that he had found a mate for Toothless, and that he had made a friend. But still, he was trapped in a cage, chained to a wall.<p>

When morning came, Torch was gone. He had snuck back into his cage so that the Outcasts wouldn't catch him. Mortem noticed this when he woke up, and realized what Torch had meant when he said that he made sure they didn't catch him. He always returned to the cage before morning.

Starlight was still asleep, and Mortem began to feel lonely. His best friend had gone back to his cage, and his one other friend was still sleeping. Just then, he heard Torch's voice. "_Dragons can still communicate over long distances. It's really not that hard._" "_Why didn't you tell me that before you went back?_" Mortem asked. "_You were sleeping so peacefully,_" Torch said, "_I didn't want to wake you up._" Mortem understood what Torch meant. "_You're a good friend, Torch,_" he said. "_You're a good friend too, Mortem,_" Torch replied.

Starlight then woke up. "_We have to figure out a way to escape,_" she said, "_And get out of this wretched place._" "_I thought you had an idea on how to do that,_" Mortem said. "_I was going to,_" Starlight said, "_But then you focused my attention on Shadow._" Mortem felt guilty. "_I'm sorry,_" he said, "_I was just wondering if you knew him. I didn't mean to ruin your thoughts._" "_I don't blame you, Little One,_" Starlight said gently.

The dragons knew that in order to escape, they would have to work together and find a way out. And they had to do it before it was too late.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, back on Berk, the other teens had told Stoick what had happened the previous day.<p>

"Hiccup's gone?!" Stoick shouted. "Hey went to go and get Mortem,"

Fishlegs said. Stoick sighed. "Someone go and get Astrid," he said, "We need to gather everyone and their dragons if we're going to help Hiccup get Mortem back." "What?" Snotlout asked. Stoick glared at him. Snotlout gulped. "I mean, well, there's a bit of a slight problem, I mean..." "Astrid's gone too," Fishlegs said, "She followed Hiccup." "What he said," Snotlout said.

Now Stoick was both worried and frustrated. Hiccup and Astrid were gone. "Go and gather the entire village in the Great Hall," he said, "We need everyone's help." The teens nodded and left. Stoick sighed. He was staring to blame himself for all this. If he had listened to Hiccup about Mortem, none of that would have happened. But it was too late now to change anything. He went to go and get Thornado.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Astrid and Hiccup were still on the island they had decided to rest on. They were still in each other's arms. Hiccup was the first to wake up that morning. He smiled when he saw that Astrid was still in his arms. He embraced her. Astrid then woke up, and saw herself in Hiccup's arms. She looked up at him and smiled. "Good morning," she said. "Good morning," Hiccup said. They both leaned in and shared a kiss.<p>

"You ready to save Mortem?" Astrid asked when they broke the kiss. "As ready as I'll ever be," Hiccup replied. They both got up, woke up their dragons, and mounted them. "You lead the way," Astrid said. Hiccup nodded, and nudged Toothless. They took off, with Astrid and Stormfly behind them.

* * *

><p>Later that day, on Outcast Island, Mortem was bored beyond bored. He had no ideas about how to escape, and Starlight and Torch were taking naps. He suddenly heard an awful sound. He took a peek in one of the cages and saw a Scauldron lying on the ground, sick. Two guards came in, picked up the Scauldron, and carried it out of its cage. That gave Mortem an idea. When he saw Savage, Alvin's right-hand man, approach his cage, he shrieked and fell to the ground, pretending to be sick.<p>

Savage gasped. If the Red Death got sick and died, then they wouldn't be able to use it to destroy Berk. He opened the cage door, the creaking sound waking up Starlight. Seeing Savage approaching Mortem, and the cage door wide open, Starlight sprang onto the Outcast, pinning him to the ground. Mortem then got up, and hit Savage in the head with his tail, knocking him out cold. "_Good work, Little One,_" Starlight said.

They both ran out of the cage. Mortem stopped when they reached Torch's cage. The Typhoomerangs were giving him weird looks. Mortem wasn't one to leave a friend behind, so he grabbed the gate in his teeth, and pulled it out of place. He threw the gate aside, and gestured for the Typhoomerangs to follow him. Torch was the first one to follow. It wasn't long before Torch's brother and sister followed his lead. Torch's mother was the last to follow.

The six dragons made it out of the prison in no time. Starlight led Mortem and the family of Typhoomerangs down to the shore, where they rested.

"_I would like to get to know your family more,_" Mortem said to Torch. Torch nodded, and gestured to his siblings. "_The blue one is my younger brother Flame, the yellow one is my older sister Osprey,_" he said. He then gestured to his mother. "_And she's Scarlet,_" he added. Scarlet glared at Mortem. Mortem gulped. "_He was raised by the Legendary Dragon Trainer,_" Starlight told Scarlet, "_He won't hurt anyone. Except for the Outcasts, that is._" Scarlet nodded, but she still glared at Mortem. "_I'll be keeping my eye on you,_" she said. Mortem gulped again.

Knowing that they couldn't stay in one spot for too long, the dragons headed inland, toward Outcast Island's Wild Zone. It seemed to be the only place that was safe enough for them. There weren't many dragons in the Wild Zone when they got there, only a few Deadly Nadders and Gronkles. "_They must be trying to train the other dragons,_" Starlight said. They walked out into the open. As soon as they did, the other dragons took one look at them and left.

The six dragons all lay down to rest. Mortem turned to look at Starlight. "_How did you know that when I mentioned Toothless's name, you knew that I was talking about Shadow?_" he asked. "_Shadow's nickname is famous all throughout the dragon tribes,_" Starlight said, "_As famous as the Legendary Dragon Trainer himself._" "_Do the dragons all call Shadow by his real name, or do they call him Toothless?_" Mortem asked. "_Many of us Night Furies prefer to call Shadow by his real name,_" Starlight said, "_But the other dragon tribes prefer to call him Toothless. They think he sounds more like a hero that way._" "_Probably because that's what Hiccup calls him,_" Torch added.

Mortem looked at Starlight. "_I guess you like to call him Shadow more than you like to call him Toothless,_" he said. Starlight nodded. "_True,_" she said, "_But I don't mind at all what other dragons decide to call him._" "_I like the name 'Toothless' better,_" Mortem said, "_I'm used to calling him that._" Starlight nodded again. "_That is fine, Little One,_" she said.

As Mortem and Starlight talked about Toothless, Torch and his family talked about Mortem. "_Mortem is a Red Death,_" Torch said, "_But he's really very good. He's my best friend._" "_It's not his species I'm worried about,_" Scarlet told her son, "_It's the fact that the Outcasts are planning to use him to destroy our ex-home._" "_I really want to go back to Berk,_" Flame piped up, "_I miss all of the new things we got to discover._" "_I want to go back too,_" Osprey said, "_Can we, please?_" Torch nodded. "_I really want to see my friends again,_" he said, "_And that way, we'll be close to Mortem._" Scarlet realized that her children were viewing Berk as their home, and that deep down, she wanted to go back too. She'd never admit it, but she actually missed everything that she had experienced on Berk. She nodded. "_Fine,_" she said, "_We can return to Berk once we get off of this island._" Flame, Osprey, and Torch all cheered.

Mortem and Starlight watched as the young Typhoomerangs celebrated going back to Berk. Mortem wanted to go home too, but his wings weren't strong enough yet to carry him there. And he was positive that the other dragons couldn't swim as well as he could.

It was then he heard the familiar roar of a Night Fury. And not just any Night Fury. Toothless. He quickly got up and responded with his

own roar. He heard Toothless's roar again. Then he heard a Deadly Nadder's roar. Stormfly. He could see their silhouettes as they came closer. The two dragons landed somewhere outside the Wild Zone. Mortem took off. Starlight, Torch, Flame, Osprey, and Scarlet followed.

Mortem ran to the edge of the Wild Zone to see Toothless and Stormfly with their trainers. His 'parents' had come to rescue him. He bounded out of his hiding place, catching the attention of the two dragons. Following their dragons' gazes, Hiccup and Astrid saw Mortem coming toward them. "Mortem!" Hiccup said as he ran to meet him. Mortem stopped running, and let Hiccup run over and hug him. "Mortem, I was so worried about you," Hiccup said. Mortem gently nuzzled him. Astrid walked over and hugged Mortem as well.

Starlight and the Typhoomerangs watched as Mortem reunited with his 'parents.' "_They love him like he's their own son,_" Starlight said. "_I'm amazed that they do,_" Scarlet said, "_Despite everything that his mother had done._" Hearing their voices, Mortem turned his attention on them. He pulled out of Hiccup and Astrid's embrace, and walked over to his friends. Toothless was the first to react. "_Starlight, is that you?_" he asked. "_Shadow,_" Starlight said. Toothless bounded over to Starlight and rested his head on her shoulder. Starlight returned his affection in kind.

Torch, Flame, and Osprey rushed forward to meet Hiccup. "Torch, is that you?" Hiccup asked. Torch responded by jumping into his arms. Osprey and Flame did the same. Scarlet walked over and nudged Hiccup and her children gently. Astrid watched as the Typhoomerangs greeted Hiccup. Without warning, she walked over and embraced Hiccup and the young dragons. Hiccup returned the embrace. "Well, isn't this nice?" asked a voice.

Hiccup and Astrid turned to see Alvin and Savage standing behind them. "This is a very lovely reunion, isn't it?" Alvin asked. Hiccup glared at him. "What do you want, Alvin?" he asked. "I want that Red Death," Alvin said, pointing to Mortem. Mortem shrank down in fear. "You're not getting him," Hiccup said, and stood in front of Mortem. Astrid stood next to him. "I always make sure that I get what I want," Alvin said, "And I will make sure that I get the Red Death no matter what it takes to get it. Even if I have to kill you for it, Hiccup."

Hiccup didn't move. He wasn't going to let Alvin get Mortem. But there was nowhere for them to run. An army of Outcasts appeared out of nowhere, surrounding them. Alvin laughed. "It's your choice, Hiccup," he said. "_We'll find a way out of this,_" Hiccup said in his thoughts, "_And when we do, Alvin will pay for this._"

* * *

><p>The dragons escaped, and are reunited with their friends. But will they be able to make it home? The suspense! Review, follow, or favorite!

16. Chapter 16

Chapter 16:

**I would like to thank those who reviewed, followed, and favorited.
Now to see what happens next.**

* * *

><p>Mortem couldn't imagine a scene worse than this. Surrounded by the evil Vikings from his dream, with nowhere to run, and with his friends and family at risk. How he wished that it was all a bad dream, and that he would wake up soon. But it was real, and it was a real problem.<p>

Hiccup didn't want to give up Mortem, but he didn't want Alvin to hurt anyone either. He had to fight back.

Alvin, however, was tired of waiting for Hiccup to answer. "Have it your way," he said, and motioned for the Outcasts to move forward.

The Outcasts advanced on Alvin's signal, and restrained Astrid and Hiccup and the dragons. They had no trouble getting Toothless, who couldn't fly on his own. Starlight looked at Toothless and noticed that half of his tail was missing. "_So the rumors were true,_" she said to herself. She then turned to Stormfly. "_You must be Darttail, his friend,_" Starlight said. Stormfly nodded. "_I prefer the name Stormfly, _" she said.

Scarlet was hard for the Outcasts to hold on to, since she was being protective of her children, and fighting against their hold. Mortem was frozen with fear, as he watched his friends and family be restrained by his worst enemies.

No one knew at the time what came over the terrified dragonet, but his expression suddenly changed from frightened to angry. He shook off the Outcasts that were restraining him, and swung his clubbed tail, knocking back other Outcasts. He turned to look at the Outcasts that were restraining his 'parents'. He knocked one of them out with his tail, and headbutt the other. Hiccup and Astrid looked at Mortem in shock. Mortem had never tried to hurt anyone before, neither dragon nor Viking. As more Outcasts advanced, Mortem curled himself protectively around Astrid and Hiccup. Hiccup understood at once. Mortem was fighting to protect them.

But it wouldn't be long before Mortem would be overpowered, and of course Mortem knew that. The Outcasts were more organized, as well as armed with advanced weapons. But Mortem wasn't about to give up. His family was in danger, and he was going to make sure that the Outcasts didn't hurt them.

But Hiccup knew that Mortem couldn't take all of them. "Mortem, you can't beat them. Go back to Berk, we'll follow you." Mortem gave Hiccup a sad look. He didn't want to leave. "Just go!" Hiccup nearly shouted. Mortem realized that his 'dad' was trying to protect him, just as he was trying to do. Mortem nodded. He then spread his wings and took off. Torch noticed and pointed Mortem out. He and his siblings took off as well, with Scarlet following.

Toothless noticed all of them, and knew that he, Stormfly, and Starlight wouldn't be able to fight off the Outcasts by themselves. He turned to Hiccup and gestured for him to climb on his back. Before Hiccup could move, however, two Outcasts ran up to him and Astrid and

grabbed both of them. "Toothless, get out of here," Hiccup said, "Run!"

Toothless wanted to help, but he knew that it would be better if he obeyed. He turned to Starlight and Stormfly, who both nodded. The two dragons hovered above Toothless, grabbing him and lifting him into the air. They then flew off, following Mortem and the Typhoomerangs. Astrid and Hiccup watched as they flew off. Astrid glared at Hiccup. "Yeah, I know," he said, "I'm dumb." The two Outcasts led them over to Alvin.

"Those dragons escaped this time," Alvin said, "But we'll get them eventually. And until then," he turned to the two Vikings, "We'll keep these two in the prisons."

* * *

><p>Mortem really wanted to help his 'parents', he knew that they were trying to protect him, as he was trying to protect them. He flew off, in the direction of Berk, though occasionally glancing back to see if the other dragons were following him. He had seen everything that had happened after he took off, and he had promised himself that he would save Hiccup and Astrid, just as they had tried to save him.<p>

He slowed down so that Starlight and Stormfly could catch up. Toothless's weight had been slowing them down, but they were able to catch up to Mortem, and place Toothless on his back for a ride. Mortem still had a lot of questions to ask Starlight and Toothless about the lifestyle of Night Furies, but he was worried that this was a bad time. Still, his curiosity got the best of him.

"_How come Toothless is the only Night Fury on Berk?_" he asked. "_I was assigned to live there temporarily, to learn the lifestyle of the Vikings that lived there,_" Toothless said, "_And I obviously got more than I bargained for. I got a best friend. And a new life. I couldn't stand going home, knowing that I would leave my friend behind. When I had the chance to, I refused. My friend needs me to fly as much as I needed him to do the same._" "_So you never went back?_" Mortem asked. Toothless nodded. "_Do you live on a special island that only Night Furies inhabit?_" Mortem asked. "_Yes indeed, Little One,_" Starlight replied. "_Is it because Night Furies don't get along with other dragons?_" said Mortem, "_Because Uncle Toothless told me that the last time Dad tried to find more Night Furies, it ended up being a trap by the Outcasts. They tricked Dad and Uncle Toothless into going alone, without the others. Is it true?_"

"_Night Furies are the only dragons that inhabit the island because we're the only ones who know how to find it,_" Toothless said, "_Not because we don't get along with other dragons. Only Night Furies can find their island home._" Mortem understood. "_Have you known Starlight for a while?_" he asked. "_Starlight and I have known each other since our Hatch Days,_" Toothless said, "_Most of the time, we feel as though we are each others' soul mate, which we feel is true._" "_What is a soul mate?_" Mortem asked. "_A soul mate,_" Starlight said, "_Is the person or dragon that you know you are meant to be with._" "_You mean like boyfriend and girlfriend?_" Mortem asked. Starlight nodded and landed on Mortem's back, next to Toothless.

"_So you guys are soul mates?_" Mortem asked. "_We've been for quite a while,_" Starlight replied, "_But now I'm worried about how those Vikings back on Berk will react to another Night Fury. Monsters like us used to be chained, and taken to the kill ring for execution. And to think that we were innocent too._" "_Maybe you guys just think that you're monsters because everybody treated you that way,_" Mortem said. Starlight nodded. "_You're wise beyond your years, and your species, Little One,_" she said, "_The Legendary Dragon Trainer has raised you well._" If Mortem could change colors like a Changewing, he would have turned crimson from head to tail. That was the nicest thing anyone had said to him, although it wasn't the first time he had heard it.

"_Yeah,_" he said, "_I get that a lot._"

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Hiccup and Astrid were being led to their cell. Alvin now had the idea that they would do anything to make sure that the other stayed alive. Even if it included telling him everything about the Red Death. He was sure that he could convince them to tell him everything.<p>

Hiccup and Astrid were nearly thrown into their cell, as Alvin and the two Outcasts that had led them there advanced on them. "I have reason to believe that you two know a lot about that Red Death," Alvin said, "Tell me everything and no one gets hurt." Hiccup refused to speak. He knew what Alvin was up to, and he wasn't just going to give up and tell him everything.

Alvin wasn't going to give up easily either. He made sure that he got what it was he wanted, and he wanted Mortem. While trying to think of a way to get Hiccup to talk, he noticed something shiny on the ground. Shiny and gold. It was Astrid's bracelet. It had fallen off of her wrist when she and Hiccup were thrown into their cell. Alvin reached down and picked it up.

Hiccup noticed what Alvin had in his hands, and he didn't want to lose the bracelet. "Give it back, Alvin," he said. "Oh, I will," Alvin said, "As soon as you tell me everything there is to know about the Red Death." Hiccup didn't want to tell Alvin about Mortem, but he also didn't want to lose Astrid's bracelet. After a minute of thinking, he decided what he thought he should do. "There is nothing to know about the Red Death," he said. Alvin shrugged. "Suit yourself," he said. He then grabbed two ends of the bracelet, and with one tug, broke it in two.

Astrid had been watching the entire time, and she couldn't believe that Hiccup had given up the bracelet to keep Mortem a secret. Alvin tossed the broken bracelet to the ground and walked out of the cell. He turned to one of the guards. "Make sure that you don't fall for any of their tricks," he said, "Neither of them get out of that cell." The guard nodded. Alvin then closed the door to the cell and walked off, leaving Hiccup and Astrid alone.

Hiccup crouched over the broken bracelet, and picked up the pieces. Astrid crouched down next to him. "It's fine, Hiccup," she said, "You can make another one." Hiccup sighed. "You don't understand," he said, "It took me nearly two weeks to make that bracelet. I wanted it

to be perfect, and I wanted you to love it as much as I loved you. I scrapped many of my ideas. I could have made it better than this, but I was running out of time. I was going to leave for Dragon Island soon, and I wanted to give it to you before then. But then I asked you if you wanted to go with me, and you said you did, so I thought that I would work on it more. But I didn't make a lot of progress. But you loved it. When I gave it to you, you put it on as soon as you got it. That bracelet was the only thing I made for you that wasn't any kind of weapon."

Astrid listened as he talked, and realized why Hiccup had made her that bracelet. He wanted to give it to her to let her know that he loved her. And it had worked. She hadn't taken the bracelet off since the day he had given it to her. It reminded her of him, and the reason why he had given it to her. She had loved the bracelet, but she never loved it more than she loved Hiccup. Who knows what came over her at that moment, but Astrid felt tears in her eyes. She hugged Hiccup tightly, her head on his chest. Hiccup dropped the two broken halves of the bracelet and hugged her back.

"I never needed that bracelet in order to be happy," Astrid said, "All I needed was you." Hiccup felt his body grow warm, and not just from the embrace. He lifted his hand up to Astrid's head, and stroked her hair. Astrid couldn't hold back her tears any longer. Her cries were muffled as she buried her head into Hiccup's chest. Hiccup continued to stroke her hair, hoping to help her calm down. "It's okay," he said, "It's gonna be okay. I'm right here. It's okay." He then leaned in and nuzzled a kiss into her beautiful blond hair. "I'm right here with you, Astrid," he said. Astrid felt his gentle touch and heard his gentle words. She almost lost it when she felt him kiss her. He was so gentle. She buried her face further into his chest and continued to cry. "I love you," she said as she sobbed into his chest.

Hiccup nearly started crying himself when he heard her say those three words. He held her close to him, and he continued to gently stroke her hair. "I love you too," he said softly.

It took all of Astrid's strength not to squeeze Hiccup tighter, or to cry harder. His kind, gentle words echoed through her head as she pulled out of the embrace and crashed her lips into his. She wrapped her arms around his neck, deepening the kiss. Hiccup returned her affection in kind, wrapping his arms around her waist and kissing her back. They sat there, kissing each other for what seemed like forever. Neither of them wanted the kiss to end. But they eventually did break the kiss when they ran out of air. They stared into each other's eyes, Astrid's were red from crying. They both wanted the moment to last forever, never leaving each other's side. Hiccup pulled Astrid to him and hugged her. Astrid hugged him back. They both fell asleep in each other's arms.

Meanwhile, the two guards outside their cell stood on either side of the cell door, gradually moving away as the two young lovers grew more and more affectionate.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Mortem had discovered that the flight back to Berk was a lot farther than any of them had anticipated. They had flown all day, and Mortem's wings had begun to ache. He had never flown so far

for such a long time. "We'll rest at the next island we see," Toothless said to Mortem. Mortem nodded and turned to Stormfly. "_So you're real name is Darttail?_" he asked. Stormfly nodded. "_You can still call me Stormfly though,_" she said, "_A dragon receives his or her name based on what dragon tribe they're from._" Starlight nodded. "_It's true,_" she said, "_A Night Fury's name is always based on the fact that they are Night Furies. We receive names such as Shadow, Midnight, and Nightwing. I received my name from the birthmark on my head, as you can see._" She raised one of her claws and pointed to the star-shaped white mark on her head.

Their conversation was interrupted when Scarlet roared. "_I see an island,_" she said, "_We can rest there for the night and continue our journey in the morning._" Toothless shook his head. "_You just read my mind, Scarlet,_" he said.

The dragons all landed on the island, and immediately curled up to sleep. But Torch couldn't sleep. He kept thinking about how he had been a nuisance to Toothless, back when he had been discovered by Hiccup and brought home with him. He stood up and walked over to Toothless and poked him with his claw. Toothless woke up. "_What do you want?_" he asked. "_I'm sorry that I was such a nuisance to you,_" Torch said, "_I guess the fact that I was given a place to settle in after being separated from my mother went to my head, and I began to act like a jerk._" "_It's okay,_" Toothless said, "_I also acted like a jerk. But that's all behind us now. I forgive you._" Torch nodded and started to head back over to where his mother and siblings were sleeping.

Toothless suddenly shifted to the side and lifted his wing. "_You can sleep with me tonight, if you want to,_" he said. Hearing this, Torch immediately bounded over to Toothless and settled underneath his wing. Toothless lowered his wing, which covered up Torch like a blanket. "_Thanks, Toothless,_" Torch said as he drifted off to sleep. "_You're welcome, Torch,_" Toothless said, feeling happy that they had made up.

Mortem watched as Toothless and Torch cuddled with one another, as if everything that had happened the last time they met never happened at all. He began to scratch his claws in the dirt, first lines, then curves, and soon different patterns. He started out slow, but quickened the pace as he practiced. When he was done, he nudged Toothless with his tail, and curled up into a sleeping position.

Toothless turned to look at Mortem, who was pretending to be asleep. He looked down at the ground and noticed that Mortem's lines, curves, and patterns had turned into words. And those words were spelling out a message. Toothless's face lit up as he read what Mortem had written. It was in human language, but he could still understand it.

GOOD NIGHT, UNCLE TOOTHLESS.

Toothless turned to look at Mortem, a smile on his face. "_Good night, Mortem,_" he said, and then he turned and fell asleep. Mortem smiled to himself, and then he drifted off to sleep as well.

* * *

><p>I'll admit I don't really know what OOC means, or if it stands for something, but I'll agree that Astrid was not exactly acting like herself in this chapter. Anyway, Toothless and Torch are now friends, and Mortem has taught himself how to write. Review, follow, or favorite!

17. Chapter 17

Chapter 17:

****It has probably been a while, and I apologize. I was checking out other fanfictions, and I'm impressed by the work that has been put into them. I've read Digimage's crossover, and I'll agree that no one's done that before. I'll allow him to be the first! Anyway, back to the story.****

* * *

><p>When Hiccup woke up, he noticed that Astrid was still in his arms. They had stayed in each other's arms the entire night, sharing each other's closeness. Remembering last night, Hiccup hugged Astrid tighter. Astrid stirred in her sleep, but didn't wake up. Hiccup leaned forward and kissed her forehead. "I love you," he whispered. Still half asleep, Astrid moved further into his embrace. Hiccup held her close to him. He couldn't help but notice that she seemed to be unaware of their condition. He stroked her back gently, causing her to sigh in her sleep. He gave her a small smile, before he gently kissed her.<p>

Astrid had been partly awake the whole time, and even heard him say those three words. When she felt him kiss her, it woke her up entirely. She smiled against his lips and kissed him back.

Hiccup then realized that Astrid was awake and broke the kiss. Slightly disappointed, Astrid wrapped her arms around him. "I love you too," she whispered.

Hiccup couldn't help but smile at her gentle words. He pulled her closer, and they both leaned in for another kiss. They both had forgotten where they were, and why they were there. But at that time, neither of them cared at all. Unfortunately for them, they were brought back to reality when they heard someone groan in disgust.

"Ugh, if you two are gonna do that, at least do it when no one else is awake!" They both pulled out of the kiss and turned to see Savage glaring at them through the bars of their cell. "Or do we have to move you two to different cells?" Savage asked before banging on the cell door and walking off, muttering under his breath.

Hiccup sighed, frustrated that the moment had been ruined. He sat up. Astrid noticed him and sat up as well. "I keep thinking that this is all my fault," Hiccup muttered under his breath. However, it wasn't quiet enough for Astrid to not hear him. "Why would this be your fault?" she asked. Hiccup sighed again. "If I hadn't gone to Dragon Island, the baby Red Death wouldn't have followed me to Berk, and I wouldn't have gotten us into this mess. I'm the one who left to save him." It was Astrid's turn to sigh after she heard him say that. "Even if you hadn't gone to the island, the egg would have hatched

anyway," she said, "And the baby wouldn't have anyone to take care of it, and if Alvin did get his hands on it, he wouldn't have any trouble training it to do bad things." Hiccup shook his head. "But if I hadn't left for Mortem, we wouldn't be here," he said, "Or if I had known earlier that he was following us..." He was cut off by Astrid. "Stop saying that this is all your fault," she said, "He followed you because he looks up to you, and because he loves you as much as you love him. Honestly, I don't know what either of you would have done without the other."

Hiccup heard every word that Astrid had said. And he wouldn't admit it at that time, but he didn't know what he and Astrid would do without the other as well. Astrid continued, "You just wanted to prove to everyone that even the Red Death isn't as bad as it seems. And I'm sure that we both know that Mortem was an excellent example for that. And don't tell anyone I said this, but there's another reason why I wanted to help you raise Mortem." She paused, making sure that Hiccup was still listening. He was. "The reason that I wanted to help you raise Mortem isn't just because you needed it," she said, "But because I wanted to..." she stopped, suddenly becoming embarrassed about what she was saying. "You wanted to what?" Hiccup asked. Astrid took a deep breath before finishing her statement. "...Because I wanted to be with you."

Hiccup suddenly realized what was going on. This was similar to when he had told that he loved her. It had been her turn to confess to him one of her secrets. "That's why you helped me?" he asked. Astrid nodded. "But then when you said that you didn't like me," she said, "I thought that I had made a mistake. But then you said that you loved me. And it was then that I knew I had made the right decision." Hiccup nodded. "I had wanted to tell you that I loved you for a long time," he said, "And I almost thought that I would never get the chance to tell you. If there's one thing I can't handle, it's losing you before I ever got the chance." "I can't handle losing you either," Astrid said, "I love you." Moved by her words, Hiccup embraced her. "I love you too," he said, "I always have, and I always will." Hearing his words, Astrid returned the embrace.

It was then that the cell door opened, and Savage came in with the two guards. Hiccup and Astrid quickly pulled out of the embrace. Savage turned to the guards. "Separate them," he said. The guards nodded, and advanced over to the two Viking teens. One of them grabbed Hiccup, and the other grabbed Astrid. "No!" Astrid shouted, "Let go of me! Hiccup!" Hiccup couldn't move. The guard held onto him tightly, making it nearly impossible to break free, let alone struggle. Astrid turned to Savage. "You better not hurt him," she said, threateningly. Savage shrugged. "I have my orders," he said, "And Alvin said to bring him the boy. Who knows, maybe he'll be executed!" And with that, he laughed.

As Savage continued to laugh, anger began to build up inside Astrid. She couldn't take it anymore. No one was going to take away the one she loved and get away with it. In one quick motion, she kicked the guard behind her, hitting him in the leg. The guard groaned in pain, leaning down to grip his leg. As he did so, his grip on Astrid loosened. Astrid pulled herself out of the guard's hands and ran over to the other. The other guard, a little more cowardly than the other, just dropped Hiccup and ran. Savage had stopped laughing and watched what had taken place. He began to walk over to Astrid, hoping to restrain her while the remaining guard recovered and was able to grab

Hiccup, but Astrid had other plans. She quickly lashed out, and kicked Savage right in the weak spot. Savage immediately winced, and gently gripped his groin.

With Savage distracted, Astrid and Hiccup took the opportunity to turn and run out of the prison, straight toward freedom.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, The dragons were still resting on the island. Toothless was the first to wake up. He looked beside him to see that Torch was still curled up next to him. He then turned to look at Mortem, only for a look of shock to spread across his face. Mortem had nearly doubled in size overnight, now at least four times the size of Toothless. The other dragons noticed this as they woke up, and Mortem noticed when he realized that the others looked smaller than they did last night.<p>

The change in Mortem's size didn't seem to bother Stormfly as much as it did the others. She knew that it was natural for the Red Death to grow quickly. The baby was supposed to double in size after hatching, in order to be more protected from enemies that would try to hurt it. The dragon would then double in size in a few weeks, and again in a few months. In a few years, and in some cases a decade, the dragon would reach full height and be considered an adult. Stormfly explained all of this as the dragons all ate breakfast.

Soon they were back in the air again, with Toothless and Starlight riding on Mortem's back again. They were barely a hundred feet away from the island when Mortem noticed something in the distance. It looked like a small group of dragons with people riding on them. It was Stoick, Gobber, and the other Viking teens. Stoick and Gobber were both riding on Thornado, while the others were riding on their own dragons. "_It's them!_" Toothless said, "_They can help us!_" They quickly flew over to them.

Fishlegs was the first to notice Mortem and the other dragons. "Look there!" he said, pointing. The others looked in the direction of his finger and saw the dragons. "It's Mortem!" Stoick shouted. "And the Toothless and Stormfly!" Fishlegs added. "Where are Astrid and Hiccup?" Gobber asked. "Did they get eaten?" Tuffnut asked, a huge smile on his face. Mortem jerked his head in the direction of Outcast Island. Stoick understood. "He wants us to follow him," he said, "Let's go!"

Both Viking and dragon turned and headed back to the Island of the Outcasts.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, Hiccup and Astrid had just made their way away from the prison, and they were trying to put as much distance between themselves and that awful place as they could.<p>

"I think we lost them," Hiccup said when they stopped to catch their breath. They had run far enough to lose sight of the prison, but unless they kept moving, it wouldn't be long before the Outcasts caught them again. "Nice moves back there," he added. "Thanks," Astrid said, panting, "Now what do we do?" Hiccup looked around. "We keep moving," he said, "We have to get off this island. If we find a

dragon, we train it and get out of here." "Whatever you say, Dragon Boy," Astrid said with a smile.

Hearing Astrid call him that brought a smile to Hiccup's face. He gestured to the ground ahead of them. "Lead the way, Divine Beauty," he said with a smile. Astrid looked at him with surprise, but later smiled and walked ahead of him. Hiccup smiled and started after her, his hopes high.

* * *

><p>They escaped! And they have given each other nicknames! BTW, Astrid's name actually means "divine beauty," and I thought that that would be a good nickname for her. Stay tuned for the next chapter!

18. Chapter 18

Chapter 18:

Thanks to all of those who have reviewed and have waited patiently. For those of you who haven't read my second story, you can if you want, no one is forcing you.

* * *

><p>Hiccup didn't think that he could walk any farther. It felt like his prosthetic was close to giving out. And there hadn't been a single dragon in sight.<p>

Astrid on the other hand, was getting extremely impatient. It bothered her that they were still stuck on Outcast Island. She had been sure that it wouldn't take them too long to find a dragon to train and ride home. In fact, as far as she was concerned, they probably would've been halfway back to Berk by this time.

Hiccup groaned, "The gods hate me, they must. We've been walking for Thor knows how long and how far, and we still haven't found a single way to get off of this..." "Thor-forsaken island, I know," Astrid finished for him, "And the gods don't hate you, Hiccup. If the gods had anything to do with this, then they would be hating both of us." Hiccup didn't reply. Astrid kept walking until she suddenly realized that she couldn't hear the sound of Hiccup's prosthetic clinking and squeaking as he walked. She stopped and turned around to see that Hiccup had stopped, and was now leaning up against a large rock, his arms folded across his chest.

Astrid slowly approached, noticing that Hiccup had a depressed look on his face. "Hiccup, are you okay?" she asked. Hiccup shook his head sadly. Astrid sighed. "I know that you're not happy about us still being on this island, but this isn't your fault." Hiccup gave her a slight smile. "That's the third time that someone said that nothing is my fault," he said, "Despite all of the times it actually was." "What do you mean?" Astrid asked, "You don't always mess everything up. You're a hero."

Hiccup sighed. "Yeah, I'm a hero," he said, "I'm the hero who is still restricted of what to do by almost everybody, sometimes even his own girlfriend. I'm the hero that people still don't always

listen to, or treat with respect. I'm the hero that no one even believed in before I did anything heroic. Sure, I act like a hero when the village needs one, but most of the time, I still feel like Hiccup the Useless."

Astrid's eyes widened. She hadn't expected any of that from Hiccup. It was no wonder that he was so depressed. He had lost confidence after being on the island for so long. He had thought that he'd be able to get them home, but now he felt like a failure again. "You're not useless to me, Hiccup," she said, attempting to cheer him up. "I was," Hiccup said, "Before you followed me to the cove and met Toothless. I would've done anything to get your attention. Any of the other guys would look at you and see only your beauty. But whenever I looked at you, I saw how strong, tough, athletic, brave, and skilled you were. I looked at you, and I saw you. All of you. But whenever you looked at me, all you saw was how useless I was at the time."

Understanding where Hiccup was going with all of that, Astrid decided to correct him. "I don't look at you that way anymore. You're not useless. You're smart, kind, compassionate, and you're honestly the bravest Viking that I've ever met. You're an amazing Viking, Hiccup." Hiccup looked at her with hope in his eyes. "You really think that?" he asked. Astrid nodded. "And to be honest," she said, "I actually had a crush on you when we were young. But as we grew older, I began to ignore it. And then, when we went out on that flight together, you helped me to rediscover my feelings. When I opened my eyes, I also opened my heart."

Hearing this, Hiccup couldn't stop himself from hugging her. Astrid smiled and hugged him back. "How come you never told me any of that before?" Hiccup asked. "We never loved each other before," Astrid replied, "At least not as much as we do now." "I've always loved you," Hiccup said, "Ever since the day that I met you." Hearing this, Astrid hugged him tighter. "It took me nearly ten years to realize that my true love had been right in front of me all along," she said, "And that it was you, Hiccup."

The minute he heard what she said, Hiccup's heart grew warm. "You think that I'm your true love?" he asked. "Why wouldn't I?" Astrid asked. Hiccup wasn't sure whether to answer or not. They stood that way for a long time, hugging each other. They stayed that way for what seemed like hours, and they probably would have if Hiccup hadn't spoken.

"I always thought that you were my true love," he said, "But deep down, I doubted that we would ever be together. But I was right. You are my true love." He paused before he whispered to her, "I love you." After hearing that, Astrid knew for sure that it was indeed true love. Hiccup was the only one who loved her for who she was, and she was the only one who loved him the same way. "I love you too," she said softly. They both pulled out of the hug and gazed into each other's eyes. They both leaned in for a kiss. A long kiss. A kiss that they both enjoyed. It really was true love.

Just then, there came a distant roar. The two lovers broke the kiss and turned in the direction of the roar. It sounded a lot like...Toothless. Hiccup cupped his hands around his mouth and howled. The distant roar came again, louder this time, responding to Hiccup's call. A large shape appeared, then multiple smaller ones. As

the figures came closer, Hiccup began to recognize them. It was Mortem, Stoick, Gobber, and the others-all riding on their dragons. Toothless, Starlight, Stormfly, Torch and his family were all riding on Mortem.

The dragons all landed down by the shore. The minute that Mortem landed, Toothless jumped off of his back and bounded over to Hiccup, pouncing on him, and knocking him down. Hiccup laughed as Toothless licked his face. "Yeah, I'm happy to see you too, bud," he said happily.

Astrid watched as the two friends reunited, and then noticed Stormfly flying over to meet her. Astrid ran forward and hugged her dragon. Not long after, Stoick and the others all caught up to them. Mortem was overjoyed to see his 'parents' again, and politely asked Toothless and Stormfly to move. The dragons moved, revealing their trainers. Mortem nuzzled his 'parents,' who both hugged him back. "Mortem, you're okay!" Hiccup said. He then noticed how big Mortem was. "And...you're...bigger!" Astrid couldn't help laughing after hearing Hiccup say that.

Hiccup then noticed Stoick approaching. He quickly let go of Mortem and faced his father. "I'm sorry, Dad," he said, "I was an idiot. I should have told you about what I was doing before I left, but I wanted to..." Stoick then cut him off. "You did a noble thing, Hiccup," he said, "You did something that I admit I would have done if I lost you. You went off to save your son, and you succeeded. I'm very proud of you." Hiccup's face lit up when he heard this. "Really?" he asked. Stoick smiled and nodded. Hiccup smiled back. "Thanks, Dad," he said. Stoick then laughed and hugged Hiccup, tightly. "Dad-can't-breathe!" Hiccup choked out. Stoick then let go of Hiccup and said, "Sorry." The he turned to the others as Hiccup caught his breath. "Let's get back home," he said.

It wasn't long before everyone had mounted their dragons and got ready to take off. Stormfly and Astrid approached Hiccup, who was sitting on Toothless's back. "When do you think we should tell them?" Astrid asked. Hiccup knew that she was talking about their engagement. "I'll have to tell my dad first," he said. "Tell me what?" Stoick asked. He had overheard them talking, and he wondered what was going on.

Hiccup looked at Astrid, and then at his dad. "I asked her," he said simply. "Really?" Stoick asked. Hiccup nodded. "What did she say?" Stoick asked. Hiccup glanced at Astrid nervously. Astrid nodded, obviously telling him to answer Stoick. "She said yes," Hiccup said, just loud enough for Stoick to hear. Stoick then burst out laughing with joy. "Well done, son!" he said, "And congratulations!"

Hiccup sighed as Stoick and Thornado walked off. "Now when do you think we should tell them?" Astrid asked. Hiccup shook his head. "My dad will probably do it for us," he said. They then took off with the others, heading for home.

* * *

><p>The next chapter will probably be the last, I'm not sure. Again, you can read my second story if you want, but I won't force you. Review, follow, and favorite!

19. Chapter 19

Chapter 19:

****The Outcasts are down, but not out. There will be at least one more chapter after this one, possibly two.****

* * *

><p>It took a while, but they all made it back to Berk. Mortem couldn't have flown another inch by the time they got there. His wings were strong, but he still had some growing to do.<p>

They all landed in the middle of the village.

The minute that the villagers saw Mortem, they started to head into their homes, but Stoick stopped them. "It's all right," he said, "It's been proven that this dragon is not bad. He is a very good dragon. And that's because he was raised extremely well."

When Hiccup heard this, he couldn't help but smile. He knew all along that Mortem was a good dragon. And of course, Mortem knew it too.

The villagers all approached the young Red Death cautiously. Mortem eyed them curiously as they slowly advanced. Suddenly, one of the young kids ran forward and began climbing up Mortem's tail and onto his back. Mortem gave a friendly growl and the kid proceeded to climb up. Encouraged by the young Viking's success, the other kids ran forward and started to climb up on Mortem's back. The adults all smiled and watched their children play with the friendly dragon.

Hiccup was watching as well, and he couldn't have been happier seeing Mortem finally fitting in.

Stoick suddenly walked over to Mortem and patted him on the head. "Not what I would've imagined for a grandson," he said, "But he'll do." Mortem did his best to smile.

Meanwhile, the other dragons watched from nearby. Toothless and Starlight were together, lying down with their wings draped over the other. "_I never would have thought about being here like this,_" Starlight said. "_I agree,_" Toothless said, "_Every __moment that I spend with you is special to me._" Starlight snorted. "_I was talking about seeing Mortem playing with the Viking children, and actually being accepted as part of the tribe,_" she said. Toothless shrugged. Starlight seemed to smile. "_You're right, though,_" she said, "_I treasure every moment with you, Shadow._" Toothless turned to look at his soul mate. They both leaned in, closed their eyes, and pressed their noses together.

It was a dragon kiss.

Stormfly soon noticed the two of them and smiled, seeing that Toothless had finally found his mate. Scarlet seemed happy too, but she did a good job of hiding it. Torch, Osprey, and Flame all groaned in disgust, seeing the two dragons together. Clearly, they were too young to understand romance.

Mortem also saw Toothless and Starlight together, sharing and savoring their dragon kiss. Part of him wanted to smile, and another part of him wanted to groan in disgust. _I guess love is complicated to understand,_ he thought to himself as he continued to play with the Viking children.

It took Hiccup a while to notice Toothless and Starlight, but when he did, he then realized that Toothless had found his special someone, just as he had. He was struck out of his thoughts when Astrid walked up to him and punched him in the arm-hard. "That's for leaving," she said. Hiccup clutched his arm, and looked at her. He sighed. "Okay," he said, "I'll admit that I was actually acting a little stupid, but I just..." He was cut off by Astrid kissing him.

The kiss didn't last very long, but they both felt the love in it. Astrid pulled away and opened her eyes to see Hiccup's staring back at her. Whatever Hiccup was going to say, he instead asked, "What was that for?" Astrid smiled. "That was for saving our son," she said. They both smiled at one another. Then Astrid started to lean forward. Hiccup began to lean in as well. Soon they met in a long, passionate kiss.

The kiss seemed to last longer than any of the others they had shared, and it was indeed the best so far. Hiccup wrapped his arms around Astrid's waist, and she wrapped her arms around his neck. Astrid ran her fingers through Hiccup's hair and deepened the kiss. It was as though time itself had stopped. However, it didn't take long for a few Vikings to catch sight of the two of them, and Gobber was one of those Vikings. He nudged Stoick with his arm and gestured to the couple. Stoick smiled when he saw the two of them kissing.

It seemed like forever before the two of them broke the kiss. They both stared into each other's eyes, smiling. "That's for everything else," they both said. Stoick then walked up to them and hugged Hiccup tightly. "You've made me very proud, son," he said. "Thank you, Dad!" Hiccup was barely able to breathe. Stoick let go of Hiccup and muttered, "Sorry."

While Hiccup tried to focus on getting his breath back, Stoick announced, "There will be a celebration in a few weeks." "What for?" Gobber asked. Stoick shook his head and smiled. "You'll have to wait and see," he said. He turned to Hiccup and said in a quiet voice, "That should give you plenty of time to work on the rings." He then walked off.

Hiccup had nearly forgotten about his and Astrid's wedding. He was relieved that Stoick had left him in charge of making the rings, but he knew how the wedding of a chief's offspring turned out.

* * *

><p>A few weeks after Mortem had been accepted as part of the tribe, nearly everyone in the village knew what the celebration was for. The only ones who didn't seem to know were the other teens, who Hiccup and Astrid guessed had been stupid enough to not pay attention.<p>

Hiccup was in the forge, working on the rings. As much as he enjoyed working on them, he wasn't really looking forward to the events after

the wedding. He had made them both out of gold, and they were thicker and slightly stronger than the bracelet had been. He assumed that he had to make them the same size, but he made some measurements just to be safe.

It was easy to tell which ring was whose. Hiccup's was a simple design, a gold band with his initials engraved inside. Astrid's was far more noticeable. It had taken a while for Hiccup to find a diamond that fit on the ring perfectly, and it certainly looked very nice indeed. He had also written her initials in the ring, but the "H" stood for "Haddock" instead of "Hofferson." He hoped that she would like it.

Astrid, meanwhile, had just gotten out of a conversation with her parents, and she was looking for Hiccup. And of course, she knew just where to find him. In the forge, working on the rings.

At first, Hiccup didn't notice that Astrid had arrived. He was admiring the rings. But it didn't take long for him to realize that he probably wasn't alone. So he wasn't startled when Astrid spoke up. "I knew you'd be in here." Hiccup chuckled, "Of course you'd know where to find me." Astrid was impressed that Hiccup hadn't been startled by her sudden appearance. She walked over to where he was and looked at the rings. "You do good work," she said. Hiccup blushed, and picked up the ring he had made for her.

"I know that it's against tradition," he said as he turned to face her, "But I want you to have it." He took her left hand and slipped the ring onto her finger. It fit perfectly. Astrid looked at the ring, and then at Hiccup. She smiled, and then she picked up his ring. She took his right hand and was about to put the ring on, when Hiccup stopped her. "You don't have to," he said. Astrid's smile widened. "I want to," she said. Hiccup smiled and let go of her hand. Astrid then slid the ring onto Hiccup's finger. It too fit perfectly.

The couple continued to smile at one another, their hands joined, and fingers intertwined. They both wanted to stay there forever, gazing into each other's eyes. They both started to lean in for a kiss, when suddenly there was a distant roar. They both recognized the roar. It was Mortem.

* * *

><p>Mortem had been resting on a cliff, when he noticed a strange fleet of ships approaching. The Outcasts had returned. I have to stop them before they reach Berk! he thought as he roared for his parents.

He didn't have to wait long for them, as Hiccup and Astrid arrived flying on Toothless and Stormfly. The two dragons landed and their riders dismounted them. "Mortem, what's wrong?" Hiccup asked. Mortem gestured with his head out to sea. Hiccup took out his spyglass and looked out where Mortem had gestured. "Oh no," he said. "What is it?" Astrid asked. Hiccup lowered the spyglass. "Alvin's back," he said, "He's back for Mortem." He turned to the others. "We need all of the help we can get," he said. Astrid nodded, and was about to mount Stormfly when Hiccup stopped her.

"What is it?" Astrid asked. Hiccup said nothing, and after a moment's

pause, he kissed her. It was a quick, but loving kiss. When he pulled away, Astrid asked him, "What was that for?" Hiccup sighed, "In case I can't later." Astrid gave him a small smile and hugged him. "I love you," she whispered. Hiccup was about to answer her, when Stormfly suddenly squawked. Astrid pulled out of the embrace, and mounted her dragon. "I'll get the Typhoomerangs and Toothless's mate," she said, "Try and hold them off." Hiccup nodded.

Just then, Mortem growled softly. Hiccup and Astrid turned to see Mortem scratching in the dirt. It took them a minute to realize that Mortem was writing something. Mortem then stood back so that they could read what he had written.

UNCLE TOOTHLESS'S MATE IS STARLIGHT, AND SHE KNOWS HOW TO FIND THE OTHER NIGHT FURIES.

Hiccup was stunned. So there were more Night Furies out there somewhere. Mortem began to write more.

STARLIGHT CAN SHOW MOM AND AUNT STORMFLY THE WAY TO THE NIGHT FURIES' ISLAND SO THEY CAN GET HELP.

Hiccup nodded and turned to look at Astrid and Stormfly. Astrid gave a slight nod, and then nudged Stormfly gently. The Deadly Nadder took off and the two of them began to look for Starlight. Hiccup turned back to Mortem. "Help me hold them off," he said. Mortem shrank down in fear. "You're not as small as you were before," Hiccup said, "You can do this Mortem. We need you." The last three words echoed in Mortem's head. His dad needed him. His parents needed him. His family needed him. He nodded, a determined look now on his face. Hiccup nodded once again and ran over to Toothless, and mounting him. He turned to Mortem to see that he had written one more thing in the dirt.

I LOVE YOU, DAD.

Hiccup smiled as he read the message. He looked at Mortem, who seemed to be smiling. "I love you too, Mortem," he said. Mortem had to fight back the urge to nuzzle Hiccup. He had always known that his parents loved him, but he had never heard them say it before. Mortem spread his wings and began to take off. Hiccup nudged Toothless gently, and the Night Fury took off with Mortem. The two dragons then flew off to battle together.

* * *

><p>It didn't take long for Alvin to notice Mortem. But luckily for Hiccup and Mortem, he didn't seem to notice Toothless off to the side, waiting for his trainer's command to fire. Mortem continued to fly toward the ships, a burning sensation building inside him. He didn't know what it was, but he was about to find out, as a crossbow was suddenly launched from the Outcast ship up front. Mortem opened his mouth, and shot out a stream of fire. The fire disintegrated the crossbow, and was extinguished when it hit the water.<p>

"Now, Toothless!" Hiccup shouted. With the Outcasts distracted by Mortem's new power, Toothless shot a plasma blast at one of the ships in the back. The ship burst into flames, and it was a repeat of what had happened in the last battle. The Outcasts jumped overboard as the ship sunk, only to be eaten by a pack of wild Scauldrons.

As the battle raged on, one Outcast ship after another was sunk, and Toothless and Mortem combined their fire powers to hold them off. However, there were too many Outcast ships for them to hold off. The Outcasts released an angry pack of Changewings, which didn't hesitate to attack. Mortem was somehow able to keep the Changewings attacking him off bay, but Toothless was having trouble holding off the others. One of the Changewings managed to knock Hiccup out of the saddle. With no one to help control his tail fin, Toothless began to fall along with Hiccup. They both waited for their bodies to hit the water, but they made contact with scales instead.

Hiccup, who had his eyes closed, opened them to see orange scales in front of him. He looked around and saw Toothless on Scarlet's back. But who was carrying him? "Torch!" Torch had gotten bigger in the last few weeks, and was at least three-quarters the size of his mother. His siblings were nearly as big as he was. The family of Typhoomerangs flew Hiccup and Toothless back to land, so that Hiccup could remount his dragon. Once the two were back in action, they flew off to help Mortem, with the Typhoomerangs right behind them.

Mortem was able to fight off the Changewings and even convince some of them to join in on the fight against the Outcasts. The Changewings had gotten tired of following the Outcasts' orders and agreed to help Mortem fight them. Clearscale, the leader, led an assault against their ex-handlers. But before they could do anything, there suddenly was a loud screeching noise, and then a plasma blast came out of nowhere. But it didn't come from Toothless.

Hiccup looked up to see Starlight, Astrid, and Stormfly; and with them, a huge pack of Night Furies. "_We brought the entire island!_" Starlight said to Toothless. "_I'm not sure if that was smart or dumb of you guys,_" Toothless said sarcastically. "That actually was faster than I expected," Hiccup said to Astrid. "I know," Astrid said, "Good thing I've been feeding Stormfly chicken, right?" Hiccup just smiled. Then something on board the Outcasts' leading ship caught his eye. Alvin was climbing on the back of a Whispering Death. Toothless growled. "I know bud," Hiccup said, "Not my favorite dragon either."

With Alvin on its back, the Whispering Death began heading for Berk. "We'll try and stop them," Hiccup said, steering Toothless toward the Whispering Death and its rider. However, the limbless dragon suddenly began flying downward. Alvin jumped off of the dragon's back as burrowed its way underground. Minutes later, the dragon reappeared, with many other Whispering Deaths with it. With the sun hidden behind the clouds, the Whispering Deaths all posed to fight. "This fight is really starting to get intense," Hiccup muttered. Toothless grunted in agreement.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, out at sea, all of the Outcasts ships but one had been sunk. The main ship then began to turn around and head back, when someone called out. Mortem and the others all turned to see Alvin riding on the Whispering Death, heading for the remaining ship. "Don't bother with me," the evil Viking sneered as he passed them by, "It's your friends that you should be worried about." Astrid turned to see Hiccup and Toothless surrounded by angry Whispering Deaths. "We have to help them!" she said, and urged Stormfly forward. Mortem

and the Typhoomerangs followed. Not wanting to see her mate get hurt, Starlight gestured for the other Night Furies to follow her as she followed her friends.<p>

Hiccup didn't notice his friends coming to help him and Toothless. He was more concerned about escaping the angry Whispering Deaths. Whenever Toothless knocked one of them aside, more seemed to join the fight. Just then, there was a blast of fire, and the Whispering Deaths all scattered. Hiccup turned to see Mortem and the others. "About time you guys showed up," he said.

The battle raged on and on, and it got more intense by the minute. More Whispering Deaths joined in as many of their kind got knocked aside and unconscious. Many of the angry dragons attacked Mortem, since they saw him as the biggest threat. Mortem took one hit after another, absorbing the attacks and building up heat inside his second pair of lungs. Then, without warning, he burst into a frenzy of fire, spreading it far and wide, hitting every single one of the Whispering Deaths, killing them instantly. With all of the Whispering Deaths dead, Mortem tried to stop his attack, but it was too much for him to control. Hiccup noticed this and warned the others to look out.

Mortem continued to try and stop his Supernova, but it refused to let him control it. The dragons all scattered, trying desperately to avoid the flames. They knew it wasn't Mortem's fault that he couldn't control himself, the fire was too powerful for him. The fire wasn't as strong as Mortem's mother's had been, but it was still painful. Especially when in Supernova.

All it took was a single hit for one unfortunate dragon to plummet to the ground, unconscious. And that unfortunate dragon was Stormfly. Astrid tried to steer her dragon away from the growing flames, but all too late as the two of them fell toward the ground at an accelerating speed. Seeing the two of them fall, Mortem tried harder than ever to stop his Supernova. Fortunately for him, the fuel for his fire ran out, and the Supernova finally stopped. But all too late.

Hiccup had seen Stormfly get hit, and he knew that Mortem hadn't meant to hurt any of his friends. All the same, he saw the dragon fall toward the ground, and his mind grew blank. He couldn't get himself to do anything to call out to them. "ASTRID!" But his voice was lost in the dying flames of the fading Supernova.

* * *

><p>Cliffhanger! This is probably the longest chapter I've written for this story so far. And yes, Mortem's ability is now Supernova. But his greatest strength turned out to also be his biggest weakness. Review, follow, or favorite; and be sure to keep an eye out for the next chapter.

20. Chapter 20

Chapter 20:

When we left off, Mortem lost control of his new Supernova, and accidentally hit Stormfly and shot her down. Are Astrid and**

Stormfly okay? Let's find out!**

* * *

><p>Hiccup steered Toothless in the direction where Stormfly went down. Please, Odin, let Astrid be okay, he said in his thoughts. It didn't take long for them to find the crash site, as the ground was torn up by something skidding against it. Hiccup directed Toothless to land near the torn-up ground.

Mortem was following, his heart heavy with guilt. _I didn't mean to hurt anyone,_ he said in his thoughts, _Please let them be okay_.

When Toothless landed, Hiccup jumped off of his back and began to search for his friend and fiancÃ©e. "Astrid! Stormfly! ASTRID!" But there was no sign of his loved one, or her dragon. Hiccup sank to his knees, tears welling up in his eyes. "No...please...please, no." By that time, Mortem had caught up with them and landed next to Toothless. The juvenile Red Death cooed sadly. "It's okay Mortem, it's not your fault," Hiccup said quietly, though the dragon couldn't hear him. Mortem and Toothless looked on sadly as the rest of the dragons joined them.

Hiccup didn't try to hold back his tears. The one person that he had truly loved was gone forever. And he didn't even get the chance to answer to her three lovely words. "I'm sorry, Astrid," he said, "I could've done something to help. I didn't want it to end like this. I didn't even get to tell you that..." he trailed off, tears falling down his face and onto the hard ground. "...I love you too." The minute he said those words, images of his loved one began to appear in his head. He remembered her first flight with him on Toothless, the two of them battling the Red Death together, their first kiss, the winter holiday with dragons that was also the first holiday they had ever truly spent together, the making of the Berk Dragon Academy, meeting Heather, the Thawfest games, and all the rest of the adventures they shared and the battles they fought. He sighed. "Goodbye, my love. I'll never forget you."

It looked bleak for Hiccup. Astrid was gone. They hadn't even gotten the chance to marry yet. And he didn't even...

Wait.

There was a noise. And it was coming from in front of Hiccup. He looked up to see a dark shadow coming toward him. As the shadow got closer and closer, he realized that it was Stormfly. The Deadly Nadder was covered in burns, and was limping badly. But she would be okay, as long as she got plenty of rest.

Hiccup couldn't believe his eyes. "Stormfly?" The Nadder crouched down on the ground, and looked behind herself. Hiccup then noticed that there was something on the Nadder's back. And he nearly had a heart attack when he realized what it was. "Astrid!" He got up and ran to the dragon. Astrid didn't move, her body was covered in scratches and burns, draped over Stormfly's back. Stormfly had managed to survive the blast and the fall, but could the same be said for Astrid?

Hiccup took Astrid's body in his arms, desperately looking for any

signs of life from her. "Astrid, can you hear me? Please, wake up!" But Astrid didn't move. With tears in his eyes, Hiccup embraced her wounded body. "Please, Astrid," he whispered in her ear, "I don't know what to do without you."

The dragons all watched as Hiccup continued to embrace Astrid, and Mortem was the most depressed. If she was dead, he and Hiccup would never forgive themselves. Mortem thought that it was all his fault. If he hadn't gone into Supernova...maybe things would turn out okay.

As for Hiccup, he didn't know what to do now. He kept waiting for any signs of life from his loved one, and he kept hoping that maybe, maybe she was okay. It was then that he suddenly felt Astrid's arms lifting up to hug him back. Was he imagining things? Just then, he heard her voice. "Hiccup?" He pulled out of the embrace and saw Astrid's eyes beginning to open. "Astrid?" He couldn't be imagining things, he just couldn't. Astrid smiled when she saw him. Hiccup was overjoyed. His loved one was alive! "Astrid!" He embraced her once again.

Astrid was stunned, but she hugged him back. Hiccup's eyes filled with tears. Tears of happiness. "Astrid..." He hugged her tighter. "Hiccup..." Astrid tightened her grip as well. "Astrid I...I thought I lost you," Hiccup said, trembling, "I don't know what I would've done without you." He paused, and then he finally answered to her three words. "I love you too." Astrid's eyes then welled up with tears as she heard him say those words. What would he have done without her?

Realizing that Astrid was okay, Mortem roared triumphantly. The other dragons joined the celebration. The Outcasts had turned back, Berk was safe, and they had all survived the battle. Starlight walked up next to Toothless. "_I guess this means that everything has finally turned out,_" she said. "_You can definitely say that,_" Toothless said. Starlight laughed. "_Wouldn't expect anything else from you...Toothless._" It took Toothless a minute to realize that Starlight had called him by his nickname. "_Thank you, Starlight,_" he said, "_You're an amazing dragon._" He turned to Mortem. "_And so are you._" Mortem would've blushed if he could. Starlight shook her head. "_Neither of us are as amazing as you,_" she said to Toothless. She then gave him a dragon kiss, which he gladly returned.

Meanwhile, Astrid and Hiccup were still locked in the embrace. It felt like forever before they finally pulled apart. Hiccup looked up at Stormfly, who was watching them with a mix of tenderness and amusement. "I can't thank you enough," Hiccup said to the dragon, "You saved her." Hearing this, Astrid suddenly sat up and began to look over herself to see if she had lost anything. She sighed with relief when she saw that all of her limbs were intact. Hiccup looked back at her. "Are you okay?" Astrid looked up at him and smiled. "Much better, since you're here," she said. Hiccup smiled back at her. He began to lean in, but Astrid stopped him. "You don't have to, you know," Hiccup just smiled. "I want to," he said. They both leaned in for a gentle, passionate kiss.

It felt like hours before the two of them pulled apart, and they both wanted the kiss to last forever. They gazed into each other's eyes, never wanting to look away. Hiccup suddenly sighed. "We should

probably get back," he said. Astrid's eyes widened. "Hiccup, isn't today supposed to be our wedding?" she asked. Hiccup's eyes suddenly widened as well. "We should definitely get back," he said.

Both Hiccup and Stormfly helped Astrid stand up. Knowing that Astrid and Stormfly were in no condition to fly, Hiccup realized that they had to get to the Great Hall on Toothless, with Stormfly riding on Mortem. Stormfly climbed up onto Mortem's back as Hiccup helped Astrid mount Toothless. Once they were all ready, both Toothless and Mortem took off, heading for the Great Hall.

* * *

><p>At that time, Stoick was beginning to wonder what was taking them so long. The wedding was to begin in five minutes, and yet the two of them were nowhere to be seen. "What in Thor's name is taking those two so long?" Stoick said impatiently.<p>

Suddenly, the doors to the Great Hall swung open, and there stood Astrid and Hiccup. Stoick ran over to them. "Where have you two been?!" He nearly yelled. He then noticed Astrid's condition. "What happened?" "Alvin and the Outcasts happened," Hiccup said as he brushed himself off. Stoick sighed. "At least you two are okay," he said. Hiccup nodded. "So can we get on with it?" he asked.

Stoick shook his head. "Hiccup, you really want to do this in the condition that you two are in now?" Hiccup shrugged. "Well, we've already gotten ourselves on a head start." He gestured to the rings on his and Astrid's fingers. Stoick sighed. "Alright, go ahead."

It didn't take long for the two of them to get to the altar. Once they were there, they noticed the elder, Gothi, with some sand on the wooden floor. Hiccup nodded, silently telling her to begin. Gothi nodded and began writing in the sand. Suddenly, Astrid spoke up. "Wait." She walked up to Gothi, leaned down, and whispered something in her ear. Gothi thought for a moment, then nodded. Astrid walked up to Hiccup. "What did you say?" he asked. Astrid smiled. "I asked her if we could skip ahead." "How far ahead?" Hiccup asked. Astrid smiled, and then she leaned in and tenderly kissed him.

At first, all of the Vikings in the hall were stunned, but then they cheered. Their cheers filed outside the Great Hall, where the dragons were waiting. Hearing the cheers, the dragons also began their own celebration, roaring with joy at the top of their lungs. None of the other dragons' roars were louder than Mortem's. His roar spread far and wide, all across the island.

It felt like hours before Hiccup and Astrid broke the kiss. Astrid smiled. "That far," she said. Hiccup smiled back at her. "I promise that I'll always be there for you when you need me," he said, "And that I'll always love you for who you are." "Same here," Astrid said with a smile, "But about you." They kissed again.

* * *

><p>The way the wedding turned out was certainly not what many of the Vikings had expected, especially Stoick. But it was what Astrid and Hiccup had wanted. The newlywed couple couldn't've been happier. But their happiness faded when they realized what they had to do. It was the tradition for the newlywed couple to have witnesses, as long as

one of them was the offspring of the chief. And with Hiccup being the chief's son, they had to have witnesses.<p>

Mortem was the first to notice the couple's uncomf-ort-ness, and decided that he could try to do something about it.

Hiccup dreaded each step they took up to the newly built house for him and Astrid. The witnesses were behind them, and he was definitely NOT looking forward to what they had to do with them watching. But it was tradition, and there wasn't anything that he could do about it.

When they all finally made it, Hiccup was the first inside. The house wasn't as big as the chief's but it was certainly large enough for both of the humans and their dragons to fit in there. Except for Mortem, that is. He slept outside. Astrid soon entered and walked up to her new husband. Hiccup turned to face her. He immediately wished that they weren't there, but again, there was nothing he could do about it. Just then, there was a low growl, and Mortem walked out of nowhere, and then he lay down and made himself comfortable right in front of the doorway to the house. The witnesses couldn't see a thing past the giant dragonet.

Hiccup looked at where the doorway was blocked. He smiled, and Astrid noticed him. "What?" she asked. Hiccup looked at her. "The witnesses are here," he said, "And they can't see anything. But that's not our fault, is it?" Astrid then smiled and held Hiccup in her arms.

Outside, the witnesses assumed from what they heard that the newlyweds were doing what they were supposed to, but due to the Red Death lying in front of the doorway, they couldn't see anything. Of course, Mortem had planned to lie down in front of the doorway. It was his way of giving the newlyweds the privacy they needed. He could hear everything going on, and he decided not to look, since they needed their privacy. Mortem heard Hiccup say something about removing only their lower clothing, and when Astrid asked why, Hiccup replied, "I'm not a pervert." With that, Astrid seemed to go with his request, but Mortem couldn't tell for sure.

It felt like hours, but it was really only fifteen minutes, when Hiccup called Mortem off. The dragonet moved from his spot, and the witnesses filed in. The newlyweds were lying on the bed, fully clothed. "Should we make them do it again?" one of the witnesses asked. "I don't think so," said a voice. Everyone turned to see Stoick standing in the middle of the room. "Everything nearly went according to tradition," he said, "Except for the dragon. But, it wasn't necessarily their fault that the dragon got in the way. The witnesses may leave now."

As the witnesses filed out, Stoick muttered to Hiccup, "You're cleaning the sheets. I'm not touching them." Hiccup only smiled as they all left.

As soon as the room was empty, Astrid and Hiccup got off the bed. "Do you think we did the right thing?" Hiccup asked. Astrid shrugged. "You're the one who went with Mortem lying in front of the doorway," she said. "Okay," Hiccup said, "And you think that we should've called him off?" Astrid shook her head. "I'm actually glad that we have him for a son," she said, "He's already proven that he is of

some use around here." Hiccup nodded, and then sighed. "I never would've imagined being here like this," he said, "With you as my wife, and a dragon for a son." "Of course you wouldn't," Astrid said. Hiccup shrugged. "But I'll admit that I'm sure that things are going to get better around here. Especially with you guys beside me." Astrid's smile widened, and she hugged Hiccup tightly.

Hiccup didn't hesitate to hug her back. Everything was perfect. He was finally with the girl he loved, and his best friend had found a mate, and he had finally proven to the entire village that Mortem was a good dragon. He heard Astrid sigh in the embrace. "Hiccup, I..." "It's okay," he said, "I love you too." Astrid smiled, realizing that he had known what she was going to say. They pulled out of the embrace, and started to lean in for a kiss, when they were interrupted by Toothless, Stormfly, and Starlight all roaring as they arrived. The three dragons walked inside the house, looking around. Mortem peeked in from the doorway, smiling.

Hiccup and Astrid both laughed. "We're a family now," Hiccup said, "All of us." He looked at Mortem. The dragonet continued to look in through the doorway. Hiccup smiled back at his son before turning back to Astrid. "I love you," he said. Astrid smiled at him. "I love you too," she said. They both shared a long, passionate kiss.

Mortem, who was still looking in, now knew that he was right where he belonged. With his family.

* * *

><p>Like I said before, life on Berk is never dull. And to think that I would end up having a dragon for a son. But still, Mortem is a part of this village. And he's a part of this family. Me, I'm finally with the girl I've loved since the day I met her. Toothless has finally found a mate. And I'm sure that Stormfly is happy to be close to her, well, closest friends. And Mortem? He finally has a family. And so do the rest of us.

We're a family. All of us.

To be continued.

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><p>Well, that's the end of my first story! And I've really enjoyed writing it! You're last reviews will count for these last chapters. And don't worry, there will be a sequel for this, so stay tuned. Review, follow, andor favorite!**

End
file.